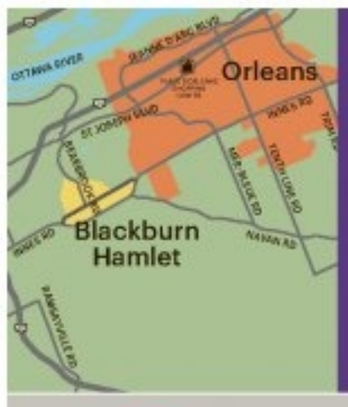

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FORT MCMURRAY
THE POLITICS OF A CRISIS
metroVIEWS

FACING FIRE

Inside a national catastrophe

Fort McMurray resident Crystal Maltais buckles in her daughter, Mckennah Stapley, after evacuating their home Tuesday.
COURTESY TOPHER SEGUIN

SPECIAL REPORT FORT MCMURRAY WILDFIRE — **10 pages of COVERAGE**

- EVACUATION
- EMERGENCY
- HEARTACHE
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metro NEWS

TIMELINE

MAY 1, 6:27 PM: POLICE WARN OF FIRES BURNING TO NORTH AND SOUTH OF CITY

SPECIAL REPORT FORT MCMURRAY WILDFIRES

follow the events

A burned-out truck in the Beacon Hill area of Fort McMurray, Alta., on Wednesday.
THE CANADIAN PRESS/HO-RADIO-CANADA-SYLVAIN BASCARON

City to cinders

Tim Querengesser
IN FORT MCMURRAY

The hardest thing to describe is the wind — a deep, gut punch of a blast powerful enough to form dust spirals along the highway, and nearly as hot on your face as when you open an oven.

The next thing is the smell — solvents, charcoal, ash — punctuated by the sound of sirens and desperate calls, seemingly everywhere along the highway, for diesel — "you got any diesel?"

Those calls were part of the overriding feeling of helplessness Wednesday evening, here on the southern edge of Fort McMurray, as dozens of people who wanted to help were forced to hold station by police as the fire yet again crossed Highway 63, the only road into town.

"Black smoke usually means a house or a car is on fire," said Jeff Parker, sitting in frustrated limbo in the cab of his truck as 50,000 litres of diesel — intended for firefighters battling the blaze — sat uselessly behind him. "And I see a lot of black smoke."

Parker has been trucking up to Fort McMurray since 2009 and has dozens of friends who live there, many of whom have been displaced.

"It's the old proverbial saying that it all depends on how the wind blows," he said. "Right now it's not the right way. What I saw today is 1,000 times worse than yesterday."

> **It's the old proverbial saying that it all depends on how the wind blows. Right now it's not the right way. What I saw today is 1,000 times worse than yesterday.**
> Jeff Parker

Just a few kilometres north, the fire that people who fight them have called "nasty" — one that has pushed more than 88,000 people to flee north and south of a remote city surrounded by boreal forest — continued inflicting pain.

By Wednesday evening its flames had swollen to 10,000 hectares, from 7,500, and officials worried the class 4 fire might potentially spread to the city's airport. More than 250 firefighters, many who came at a moment's notice to help, were battling to save a city that's small in population but central to the economic health of Alberta.

That fight was already lost in many areas: More than 1,600 homes and business have been destroyed, and with the trifecta of 30C temperatures, low humidity and strong winds — along with worries about lightning storms — officials feared the fire was not done destroying.

On Wednesday afternoon, Alberta Premier Rachel Notley declared a state of emergency, the Canadian military began mobilizing to help and the fire claimed its first fatality — in a car accident near Lac La Biche, as thousands continued to flee south.

Approaching the city from Edmonton, kilometre-long convoys of pickups trucks, evacuation buses and SUVs, many coated in beige ash, turned roads in northern Alberta into a human river.

Abandoned vehicles — including one city bus — were left scattered along Highway 63's shoulders, an apocalyptic vibe counteracted by dozens of good Samaritans, who set up spontaneous gas stations and restaurants Wednesday right on the asphalt, offering gasoline out of jerry cans, water or food out of the back of their pickup trucks.

"It's going to be a long-term recovery," said Scott Long, executive director of provincial operations at Alberta Emergency Management Agency, in a daily briefing on the fire. "The damages are surprising. It will take years (to recover), for sure."

From Parker's cab, watching clouds of smoke billow through the windshield, that was a sentiment shared.

"To bounce back from this, it's doable, but it's not going to be overnight," he said.

Tim Querengesser is the managing editor of Metro Edmonton. He has written about Fort McMurray for various publications and has covered western and northern Canada since 2008.

A FIRE UNFOLDS
From the first spark to a barren city, these are the moments that defined the disaster

Residents of Gregoire, south of Fort McMurray, are evacuated to MacDonald Island.
MAY 1 - 10:55 PM

Fort McMurray Mayor Melissa Blake signs a local state of emergency, allowing officials to declare evacuation orders for communities.
MAY 1 - 9:57 PM

Residents are warned of poor air quality and low visibility in much of Wood Buffalo.
MAY 2 – 6:05 AM

A family takes refuge in the back of their boat after evacuation at a rest stop near Fort McMurray, Alta. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nine newborns among those evacuated from hospital

EMERGENCY

Alberta Health Services moves patients safely

Ryan Tumilty
Metro | Edmonton

During the height of the fire consuming Fort McMurray, Alberta Health Services staff had to evacuate more than 100 patients from the city's hospital to escape, including nine newborn babies.

Dr. Verna Yiu AHS' Interim CEO confirmed early Wednesday morning that they had successfully moved all of the patients out of the Northern Lights Regional Health Centre to Edmonton.

"We had nine babies that were in the neonatal unit that actually had their mother with them and had to be evacuated," she said.

Yiu said AHS worked with WestJet to dispatch a plane to an oilsands site where most of the patients were initially evacuated to and brought all of them to Edmonton.

She said it was an incredible effort.

"I have to say that I am really, really grateful and proud of our staff," she said.

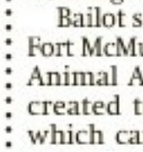
She said moving that many patients, who are now scattered around Edmonton hospitals, took an enormous amount of co-ordination and work, all while many employees were losing their own homes.

"Those employees and staff also had their own families to worry about," she said.

She said all of the patients including the newborns were healthy. She said while empty, the hospital was still standing.

COMPASSION

Crisis means displaced animals



Jeremy Simes
For Metro | Calgary

Many animals in Fort McMurray have been displaced or left behind as wildfires continued to burn at "explosive" levels Wednesday.

Deanna Thompson, executive director of the Alberta Animal Rescue Society, said some will be flown to Calgary.

At a news conference Wednesday morning, Fort McMurray Fire Chief Darby Allen said 48 animals saved from homes are at the McDonald Reception Centre. But other animals have not been so lucky.

RJ Bailot, executive director with the Alberta Spay Neuter Task Force, said rescue groups have been barred from entering the city to rescue animals trapped in homes.

"It's awful," he said. "We have dogs and cats in homes that are desperate. There's nothing we can do."

Bailot said a Facebook page, Fort McMurray Fire Emergency Animal Assistance, has been created to let owners know which camps and hotels are accepting animals.

Cuddles is believed trapped in an apartment. CONTRIBUTED

SURVIVAL

Escaping fire and smoke on horseback

Liz Brown
Metro | Canada

As the wind changed and wildfires pushed toward the north side of Fort McMurray, 16-year-old Jada Polem saddled up her horse and started riding through the bumper-to-bumper traffic on Confederation Way.

On Monday, her family had moved their three horses from Clearwater Horse Club on the city's south side to a northside campground they thought would be safe. But Tuesday, winds shifted and in hours they were moving their horses again.

"We were waiting for trailers to come back to pick up my horse, but it became impossible for them to get through," says Polem.

As the smoke worsened, Polem's father drove the truck and trailer that could only hold two horses while his daughter rode the third alongside. It was a terrifying prospect, as horses can be nervous in traffic, but Polem saw no other choice.

"She was a little nervous," Polem says of her Quarter Horse mare Mya. "But she handled it really well. I'm pretty sure she knew what was going on. Drivers were smiling and saying things to me like, 'That's a good mode of transportation,'" she adds.

It took four hours for Polem to ride 15 kilometres to safety — to the water treatment plant where her father worked. There she regrouped with her family and other horse owners, who were able to find a trailer spot for Mya.

Now the whole family — horses included — is safe. They're camping in their trailer in Boyle, 350 kilometres south of Fort McMurray. But Polem isn't sure about the status of their home. If there is extensive damage to their home, the family may stay in Boyle for the summer as they rebuild.

Karley Kenny, also a member of the Clearwater Horse Club, escapes on her horse while ponying two others. JULIE LODGE

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A FIRE UNFOLDS
From the first spark to a barren city, these are the moments that defined the disaster

MAY 2 - 11:16 AM

The communities of Prairie Creek, Gregoire and Centennial Park are mostly evacuated.

550

MAY 2 - 11:00 AM

Officials say **the fire is between 550 and 750 hectares** in size but not yet threatening homes.

Vehicles line the highway as residents leave Fort McMurray, Alta., on Tuesday. A wildfire has put all of the city under a mandatory evacuation order, which means that thousands of people who live there were told to flee. JASON FRANSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

The Fort McMurray evacuation

WILDFIRE

Two dead after collision on Highway 881

Jeremy Simes
For Metro | Calgary

The successful evacuation of 88,000 people from Fort McMurray was a gargantuan undertaking in such a short period of time.

Dale Benfield, deputy director of emergency management with the Rural Municipality of Wood Buffalo, told Metro the orderly response was due largely to early volunteer evacuation compliance, dividing the town in two, community assistance and social media.

The evacuation orders began Sunday, as Fort McMurray Mayor Melissa Blake signed a local state of emergency, allowing officials to declare evacuation orders for communities.

Shortly after, volunteer evacuations began for the communities of Gregoire and Prairie Creek. Later on in the day, as fire conditions changed and the city limits were threatened, mandatory evacuation orders were put in place in Prairie Creek and Centennial Park.

There was a tragic turn of events Wednesday when an SUV collided head on with a tractor-trailer on Highway 881, a southern escape road, killing two and shutting down the road in both directions.

Volunteer evacuation begins

A fleet of buses was commandeered to get Gregoire residents evacuated to Mac Island and residents in Prairie Creek and Centennial Park were started to get moved out.

By early Monday, the volunteer count that was set out had been reached, and those three communities were essentially cleared of residents.

Later that day, after an assessment of the fire, Prairie Creek and Gregoire residents were told they could return home if they chose, but most didn't go back, fearing the situation could escalate.

Mandatory evacuation ordered

Shifting winds and other weather factors combined to create a perfect storm for the wildfire to shift course and continue bearing down on the city.

At that time, Fort McMurray ordered mandatory evacuation for Beacon Hill, Abasand, Waterways, Draper, Saline Creek, Grayling Terrace, Downtown, Thickwood, Wood Buffalo and Dickinsfield.

A city divided

It was "the big move," according to Benfield. He said the city decided to split Fort McMurray in two, where those who live south of the bridge would drive south on Highway 63 and those who live north would drive north.

Benfield said he didn't make notes during this time.

At 1 p.m. Tuesday afternoon, there were 75 officers working on the ground, knocking on doors, directing traffic and using loudspeakers to notify people.

Dozens of others were also on social media, notifying people online about evacuation information.

"We had to make some decisions based on speed and direction of fire," Benfield said.

"We had to make the best decisions we could with the information we had at the time."

Complete evacuation

By 6 p.m. Tuesday, all residents of Fort McMurray were ordered to flee. But by this point, Benfield said most of people were already on the road, either heading north or south as told.

But he commended residents for the smooth evacuation.

"This is where the community came together," he said. "People were helping people. People weren't putting themselves before others — they were trying to help their neighbour and get everybody as quickly as told."

WITH FILES FROM THE CANADIAN PRESS

MORE FIRES IN NORTHWEST ALBERTA

Two forest fires in northwest Alberta have forced more people out of their homes.

All residents in the hamlet of Glenevis, as well as those north of the Alexis reserve, about 68 kilometres northwest of Edmonton, have been ordered to evacuate the area.

"There's been one house that has burned so far," RCMP Cpl. Laurel Scott said Wednesday afternoon. "There have been no injuries."

A reception centre was set up at the nearby Cherhill Community Centre.

Also, rural residents south of High Level between Bushe Reserve and Highway 35 have been ordered to leave their homes due to a fire, according to Alberta Emergency Alert.

The government agency said residents have been asked to go to the Town of High Level office to register and receive further instructions.

High Level is 780 kilometres northwest of Edmonton. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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A FIRE UNFOLDS
From the first spark to a barren city, these are the moments that defined the disaster

Residents are advised not to operate ATVs and overhead valve engines and to give crews room to work.
MAY 2 - 4:27 PM

Prairie Creek and Gregoire residents are told they can return home if they choose, but **most don't come back** in case the situation escalates.
MAY 2 - 5:40 PM

Fire Chief Darby Allen urges residents to get their emergency kits ready. "We're in for a tough day," he says.
MAY 3 – 11:00AM

State of emergency in effect

CRISIS

Province takes control of 'unstable' situation

Alberta declared a state of emergency Wednesday as crews frantically held back wind-whipped wildfires that have already torched 1,600 homes and other buildings in Fort McMurray, forcing all 80,000 residents to flee.

"The situation in Fort McMurray is not stable. It is unstable," Scott Long of Alberta Emergency Management told reporters in a Wednesday afternoon briefing.

"The downtown core is being held through some Herculean efforts of the structural firefighters in the area."

Municipal Affairs Minister Danielle Larivee said the state of emergency allows the province to take full control of the situation, conscript people if necessary and bulldoze structures as required.

There were dangerous and dramatic developments on multiple fronts Wednesday in a story that has made headlines worldwide with stunning video footage of trucks and cars driving past sheer walls of flame.

There were haunting images of scorched trucks, charred homes and telephone poles, burned out from the bottom up, hanging in the wires like little wooden crosses.

Alberta Premier Rachel Notley flew up to survey the situation first-hand, while officials in the evacuation centre had to bolt to the south of the city as flames edged closer.

The blaze effectively cut Fort McMurray in two late Tuesday, forcing about 10,000 north to the safety of oilsands work camps.

The other 70,000 were sent streaming south in a bumper-to-bumper snake line of cars and trucks that stretched beyond the horizon. Some vehicles sat in ditches, the victims of engine trouble or a lack of gas.

The displaced arrived in communities of Anzac, Lac La Biche and Edmonton. Some were going as far as Calgary.

Crews had been battling the blaze since Sunday. But the situation turned destructive within minutes on Tuesday afternoon when the blaze, whipped up by winds, roared into the southwest corner of the city.

It engulfed homes in three subdivisions and destroyed vehicles, gas stations and a motel. Most of the homes in the suburbs of Beacon Hill and Waterways were destroyed.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A helicopter battles a wildfire in Fort McMurray, Alta., on Wednesday.
JASON FRANSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

SUPPORT

Canada reacts

ONTARIO

The Ontario Natural Resources Ministry announced it would send water-bombing aircraft and more than 100 fire rangers to northern Alberta. The firefighters were scheduled to ship out Friday.

Toronto-based charity GlobalMedic was ready to commit aerial drones to help firefighters better view the affected areas. The aid organization also offered inflatable housing and water-purification materials.

BRITISH COLUMBIA

B.C. Premier Christy Clark told media Wednesday the province needs to focus on its own wildfires as a blaze continues to ravage Fort McMurray. The province is unable to spare any firefighters to help Alberta's efforts, but Clark says B.C. has done "everything (Alberta) has asked us to do" so far. METRO

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A FIRE UNFOLDS
From the first spark to a barren city, these are the moments that defined the disaster

Mandatory evacuations are issued. Residents are told to go now to MacDonald Island Park.

MAY 3 - 2:05 PM

THE BIG MOVE. The city decides to split Fort McMurray in two. Those who live south of the bridge drive south on Highway 63 and those who live north drive north.

MAY 2 - 10:20AM

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says Canada is a country of people who help each other in challenging times. THE CANADIAN PRESS

PM extends full support

ASSISTANCE

Trudeau pledges federal resources to Fort McMurray

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau says the federal government will provide all possible assistance to Alberta as wildfires ravage Fort McMurray.

Canada is a country of people who help each other in challenging times, Trudeau told his caucus Wednesday.

"I've been dealing with offers of support and calls from the Atlantic provinces, all the way out to B.C., as people are looking for how they can support their friends and neighbours as people go through this difficult time."

Trudeau urged people with friends or family in Fort McMurray to make sure they are OK and ask what help they need.

Federal leaders called on Canadians who want to help to donate to the Red Cross.

The prime minister said he has already spoken to Alberta Premier Rachel Notley to offer his government's "total support."

Defence Minister Harjit Sajjan, in a conference call from Germany early Wednesday, confirmed a formal request for assistance has been received from the Alberta government.

Notley told a news conference that a memorandum of understanding had been signed with National Defence to provide helicopters for search-and-rescue efforts in isolated spots around Fort McMurray as well as transport aircraft to fly in firefighters.

"Our province is strong and we will get through this," she said.

The office of Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale, the federal focal point for assistance, was expected to provide more details later Wednesday.

Infrastructure Minister Amarjeet Sohi, an Edmonton MP, called the disaster heartbreaking.

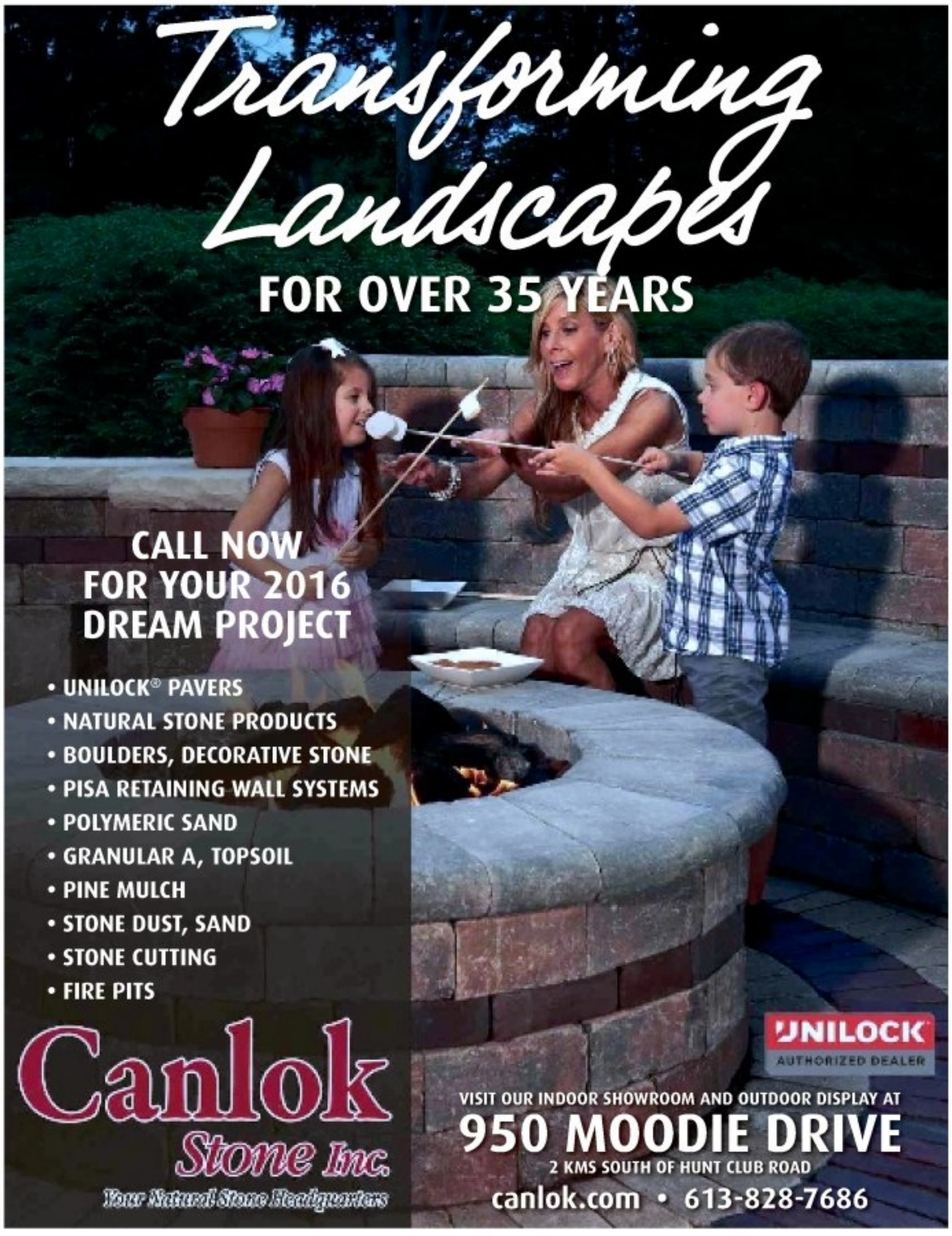
"I know people who have fled the situation. Two of my friends arrived home safely in Edmonton. It took them nine hours to get there, but they're home — home safe. It's very devastating."

Opposition leader Rona Ambrose, who also hails from Alberta, called on residents to open their homes to evacuees.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

> Two of my friends arrived home safely in Edmonton. It took them nine hours to get there ... it's very devastating.
>
> Infrastructure Minister Amarjeet Sohi

> There's 80,000 people without a home to go back to at this point ... it's a huge concern.
>
> Opposition leader Rona Ambrose



A FIRE UNFOLDS
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MAY 3 - 3:39 PM

Highway 63 southbound is closed at Mackenzie Boulevard.

All of Fort McMurray is placed under a mandatory evacuation order, including MacDonald Island.

MAY 3 – 6:20 PM

MAY 3 - 8:25 PM

Highway 63 southbound opens south of Confederation Way.

RESOURCES

Military aircraft joining wildfire fight

The Canadian military has deployed helicopters and transport planes in response to the raging wildfire that has incinerated parts of Fort McMurray, Alta. — with more support to come as needed.

Four CH-146 Griffon helicopters were en route to perform evacuations in surrounding communities under threat from the raging blaze. Another two choppers are on standby at 408 Squadron in Edmonton.

Brig.-Gen. Wayne Eyre, who is in charge of the 3rd Canadian Division and the military commander for Western Canada, called it a "very dynamic" situation. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Alberta Premier Rachel Notley gives an update on the wildfire situation currently underway in and around Fort McMurray at the Provincial Operations Centre in Edmonton.
CODIE MCLACHLAN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Premiers to meet in B.C.

PROVINCIAL AGENDAS

Notley will be absent from conference due to crisis

The disastrous wildfire raging in northern Alberta has forced government leaders in western Canada to tweak their plans to meet in Vancouver later this week and has pushed emergency management towards the front of the meeting's agenda.

Alberta Premier Rachel Notley will no longer attend the 2016 Western Premiers' Conference, which is scheduled to run Thursday and Friday.

Deputy Premier Sarah Hoffman, who also serves as the province's health minister, will replace Notley as Alberta's representative.

British Columbia Premier Christy Clark, who is hosting the annual gathering, said emergency management will be at the forefront of the discussions as the blaze in Fort McMurray, Alta., forces tens of thousands to flee the encroaching flames.

"Alberta's in the midst of it at the moment, but every other western province experiences forest fires, floods, concerns about earthquakes and other disasters," Clark said on Wednesday. "So that's going to be a major focus for us."

Still, Clark said much of the conference would also centre around the economy, given what she described as Western Canada's role in a national context.

"We have traditionally been the economic engine of the country for the last decade," she said.

The meeting will also focus on job creation, immigration and infrastructure investment, and she will push her counterparts to reach consensus on renegotiating a softwood lumber deal with the United States, Clark said.

Two provincial elections have taken place since last year's conference, and premiers will be making room for a new face at the table.

Brian Pallister was officially sworn into office in Manitoba on Tuesday, two days before the conference was scheduled to begin.

"Premier Pallister is very much looking forward to meeting and improving relations with our Western neighbours," said Olivia Billson, a spokeswoman for the premier.
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A FIRE UNFOLDS
From the first spark to a barren city, these are the moments that defined the disaster

MAY 3 - 9:15 PM
Buses at Timberlea Extra Foods and Jubilee Centre are set up to take evacuees to Anzac.

MAY 3 - 9:41 PM
Motorists stranded on Highway 63 are asked to stay put as police patrol the area with gas cans.

MAY 3 - 10:00 PM
Edmonton Fire Rescue and the Edmonton Police Service send fleets to help with the Wood Buffalo fires.

Raging forest fires whipped up by shifting winds sliced through the middle of the remote oilsands hub city of Fort McMurray, prompting the evacuation of the entire city.
TERRY REITH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Oil, gas firms tend to needy

SHELTER

Focus on relief effort rather than business

Helen Pike
Metro | Calgary

Alberta's oil and gas companies are scaling back to essential workers, are housing evacuees and are even shutting down facilities as wildfires continue to threaten Fort McMurray, Alta.

As 88,000 people fled the immediate region of Fort McMurray — seeking refuge in several camps set up to house evacuees — companies such as Suncor, Shell and Imperial Oil and Husky were being run on bare-bone crews.

On Wednesday, Shell said it made the decision to focus on getting employees and their families out of the region while also freeing up room at its 2,000-person work camp for some of the 80,000 people who were ordered evacuated Tuesday from Fort McMurray.

Shell's mining operation is located about 70 kilometres north of the city.

"Right now, our priority is providing support for our people, their loved ones and others in the area," Shell spokesman Cameron Yost said in an email. "Our work camp, the Albian Village, is now open to all evacuated Fort McMurray residents."

Others, like Calgary-based Husky Energy, whose site is some 60 kilometres from the fire, said it's business as usual.

"We have opened our camp facilities to evacuees, and we're helping in any way we can," said Mel Duvall, spokesman for Husky.

Suncor Energy spokesman Paul Newmarch said that company has evacuated all non-essential employees from the operations across the region.

Imperial Oil hasn't had any impact to operations, but is reducing staff to essential workers at the Kurel oil sands mine while keeping a close eye on the situation as it develops.

COVERAGE

Track all expenses: Insurance companies

Insurance providers are preparing to assess the damage from a massive fire still burning in Fort McMurray, Alta., that has charred homes, cars and other treasured possessions.

The Insurance Bureau of Canada is urging those who have been forced to leave the city to contact their insurance providers and keep track of all their expenses.

"Insurers are mobilized and will answer questions," said IBC spokesman Steve Kee.

Home insurance typically provides coverage for the property, the possessions inside and living expenses incurred while unable to stay in the residence, said Rocco Neglia, vice-president of claims at Economical Insurance.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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A FIRE UNFOLDS
From the first spark to a barren city, these are the moments that defined the disaster

MAY 4 - 12:00 AM Northlands Exhibition Centre opens its doors in Edmonton to accept Fort McMurray evacuees.

MAY 4 – 1:20 AM Highway 63 reopens north of Confederation, but fuel is not readily available.

MAY 4 - 10:00 AM **7.5K** Officials say the out-of-control conflagration spans between 7,500 and 10,000 hectares.

A world on fire

As fire ravages Fort McMurray, Alta., these images depict some harrowing scenes from the carnage.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

ESCAPE FROM THE FLAMES Smoke fills the air as cars line up on a road in Fort McMurray on Tuesday in this image provide by radio station CAOS91.1. CAOS91.1(KAOS)/HO/THE CANADIAN PRESS

FUEL FOR THE ROAD AHEAD People gather for gas being handed out at a rest stop near Fort McMurray on Wednesday.
JASON FRANSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

SAVING WHAT THEY CAN Family pictures packed in suitcases are seen as a family of evacuees camp out on their van at a beach south of Fort McMurray on Wednesday.
JASON FRANSON/THE CANADIAN PRESS

SURREAL VIEW This photo taken through a car windshield shows smoke rising from a wildfire as it rages outside of Fort McMurray on Tuesday. The entire population of the Canadian oil sands city had been ordered to evacuate as the wildfire whipped by winds engulfed homes and sent ash raining down on residents.
MARY ANNE SEXSMITH-SEGATO/THE CANADIAN PRESS VIA THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

BY THE NUMBERS

RESOURCES MOBILIZE AS WILDFIRE SPREADS

Flames from a wildfire eating its way through the bone-dry forests surrounding Fort McMurray continued to lick at the northern Alberta city on Wednesday. Some numbers associated with the fire:

75

Size: 75 square kilometres. Expected to be 100 square kilometres by end of Wednesday.

1,600

Structures burned: 1,600 (as of Wednesday afternoon).

80K

Total number of people displaced: More than 80,000.

10K

Evacuees: 10,000 in oilsands camps to the north of the city. Another 70,000 south to Anzac, Lac La Biche, Edmonton and Calgary.

300

RCMP officers deployed: 300.

and more

Resources on scene: 250 firefighters, 12 helicopters, 12 pieces of heavy equipment, 16 air tankers, 22 tanker trucks.
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A FIRE UNFOLDS
From the first spark to a barren city, these are the moments that defined the disaster

88K

Wood Buffalo announces 88,000 people have been evacuated, with no reports of injury.

MAY 4 - 10:28 AM

A boil-water advisory is issued for the entire region.

MAY 4 - 11:06 AM

Former Ottawa resident safely

NATURAL DISASTER

'The scariest feeling I've ever had,' says Sarah Anderson

Joe Lofaro
Metro | Ottawa

It only took a couple of hours for the sky in Fort McMurray to shift from clear and blue to "raining ash," which is how Sarah Anderson described the scene as she and her partner fled their home early Tuesday evening.

The former Ottawa resident moved to Alberta about nine months ago and had just settled into a newly purchased home in Parsons Creek with her partner, Tyler, on Monday.

The next day, the couple quickly gathered a few clothes, toothbrushes, some non-perishable food and mortgage documents as they fled their home under a mandatory evacuation order as a wildfire ripped through the oilsands town of 60,000.

Abandoned vehicles litter Highway 63, south of Fort McMurray, Alta., as residents fled the wildfire engulfing the city.
BRIAN LANGTON/THE CANDIAN PRESS

"It was really eerie because we had completely blue, beautiful skies. If you looked out the front window you would never know anything is going on, but you look in the side view mirrors and it was just black," she said when reached by phone Wednesday.

"It was cars bumper-to-bumper as far as the eye can see."

At a Tuesday press conference, Premier Rachel Notley said it was largest fire-related evacuation in Alberta's history.

Anderson, a Carleton University graduate and former Ottawa radio reporter, could see from her office window flames licking the sky over the neighbourhood of Beacon Hill as well as smoke and ash hovering over downtown.

About 70 per cent of the homes in that neighbourhood were wiped out by the wildfire as of Wednesday morning, according to the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo.

For most of the late afternoon, Anderson was on-air at the Country 93.3 and Rock 97.9 stations where she works, telling listeners about the voluntary evacuations.

Inset: Nine months after moving to Alberta, Sarah Anderson had to flee Fort McMurray with her partner, Tyler.
Main: They had recently purchased a home in Parsons Creek.
COURTESY SARAH ANDERSON

"Basically, at 5 o'clock, I was starting to fear for my safety," she said.

About an hour later, the entire city of Fort McMurray was under a mandatory evacuation order, but by that time Anderson had already raced home to gather her things, packed the truck, and hit the road.

The only thing on her mind was getting out of town safely, because the drive out of downtown left her wondering if she

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FW-17: METRO OTTAWA

Officials update damage to homes, including a 90 per cent loss in the Waterways neighbourhood, 70 per cent in Beacon Hill and 50 per cent in Abasand. Thirteen trailers were lost in Mckinlay Crescent and roughly 30 in Wood Buffalo. In total, roughly 1,600 structures have been destroyed.

MAY 4 - 12:30 PM

The Alberta government declares a state of emergency.

MAY 4 - 3:30 PM

The fire breaches the intersection of Highway 63 and Highway 69, so no traffic can pass northbound or southbound

MAY 4 - 4:05 PM

evacuates as wildfire rages on

Former Ottawa resident Sarah Anderson took this photo of a smoke-filled sky. COURTESY SARAH ANDERSON

would be able to get through the gridlock later.

"It was probably the scariest feeling I've ever had," she said.

"I was driving a friend of mine home and telling her about covering the (Oct. 22, 2014) shooting in Ottawa and knowing you're standing on a street with an active shooter and that being like nothing compared to the overwhelming sense of fear that I had yesterday."

She didn't feel safe until she finally met up with Tyler and was in their truck, leaving everything behind. "That's the only thing that matters. The rest is just stuff."

She and her partner headed to the Athabasca Lodge about 50 kilometres north of Fort McMurray. It's usually used as a campsite for oilsands workers, but on Tuesday night many of them slept in their trucks and gave up their rooms to families looking for a place to stay, said Anderson.

On Wednesday morning, the couple tried to arrange a flight to Calgary, but were unsuccessful. They planned to spend another night at the lodge as the province figures out a way to deal with the unrelenting wildfire.

The fire isn't expected to let up any time soon. In fact, officials fear it might get worse.

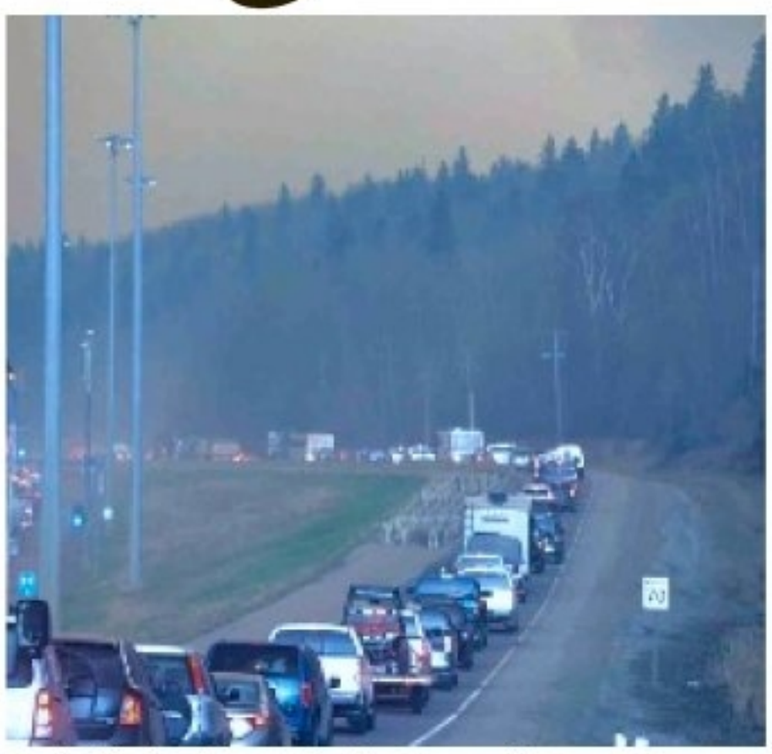
The municipality said Wednesday 88,000 people in and around Fort McMurray had been successfully evacuated and there were no reports of injuries or deaths related to the fire.

Other cities, including Ottawa, are offering help.

"The City of Ottawa has contacted Emergency Management Ontario to offer assistance as a result of the fires in Fort McMurray should they receive a request from Emergency Management Alberta," said Anthony Di Monte, acting general manager at Emergency and Protective Services at the City of Ottawa, in an email to Metro.

Ottawa Mayor Jim Watson says he has asked the city manager to look into ways the city can help firefighting efforts in Fort McMurray. He will likely reach out to the fire marshal offices in Alberta and Ontario before deciding whether it's the best use of firefighting resources.

WITH FILES FROM LUCY SCHOLEY/METRO



Smoke fills the air as people drive on a road in Fort McMurray, Alberta on Tuesday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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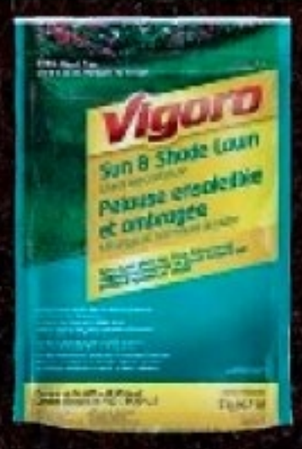

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Call it Rheaume with a view

BACKSTAGE PASS

New album by Métis singer gets decidedly introspective

Trevor Greenway
Metro | Ottawa

When Amanda Rheaume drops her new album Patterns on Friday, things will start getting personal.

The Ottawa-born, Métis songstress and aboriginal Juno nominee is letting the whole world in on her life — her many struggles of growing up, her toxic relationships and her anger surrounding the staggering numbers of missing and murdered indigenous woman in our country.

In a sense, you could say that Patterns is her raison d'être.

"It's definitely a new feeling to be so open and vulnerable about what I've been going through, but I think it's really important, because we are all human," says Rheaume, just days away from Thursday's NAC Fourth Stage show to launch the new album.

"Circumstances are different, but feelings are the same. We can relate to each other even just by different circumstances."

The entire album is a personal embrace for Rheaume, coming to terms her family history, grief, loss love. Patterns is somewhat of a storybook — tales of struggle from her grandfather, the late Métis member of Parliament Eugene Rheaume and their plight to find acceptance in Northern Manitoba; stories of grief dealing with the death of close friend and collaborator Fraser Holmes; the end of a troubled relationship, doomed from its beginning.

> **It's definitely a new feeling to be so open and vulnerable.**
> Amanda Rheaume

The album gets really heavy on Red Dress, in which she teamed up with Chantal Kreviazuk to make a statement about victim-blaming among missing and murdered indigenous women. The song hits home, especially with Rheaume's smoky voice singing "I am a woman with no worth."

Amanda Rheaume plays the NAC Fourth Stage Thursday to launch Patterns. COURTESY JEN SQUIRES

"After these women are either murdered or taken or sexually assaulted, there is still a large number of opinions that say, 'They shouldn't have been where they were or they could have made a decision to not be in that situation.'

"When you hear a woman's voice saying, 'I'm so sorry, I'm not worthy,' for me, I felt that was the most effective way to get my feeling out about it."

The song is a fundraiser for the Native Women's Association of Canada's Safety and Violence Prevention Program and takes on heavy issues like intergenerational trauma and addiction.

For Rheaume, the song is about starting a conversation and empowering listeners to make a difference, one by one.

"There is not one thing that people can do to help. It's about doing one thing at a time and helping who we can," she says.

"I think people feel like they can't make a difference because they are just one person, but the truth is we can all make a difference, we just need to try. You can't really get to healing until things start getting talked about."

Rheaume brings her powerful new album, Patterns, to the NAC Fourth Stage Thursday, marking the very last performance ever in the space before renovations begin.

She has a few treats up her sleeve, with Jim Bryson, who produced the new record, showing up for some jamming on the Fourth Stage.

"We are going to play all the songs off the new album and have a nice little sendoff to the NAC Fourth Stage."

TRANSPORTATION

City seeks limited use of photo radar

Emma Jackson
Metro | Ottawa

It's a slow and steady race toward photo radar.

The city's transportation committee voted Wednesday to ask the province for permission to use photo radar, but only in school zones and only when councillors agree on its use.

That's a big step back from what Coun. Riley Brockington envisioned when he raised the issue in March.

Speeding is often a bigger problem on major roads leading to schools, rather than in the school zones themselves, he said Wednesday.

58%

Drop in collision rates in Gatineau since permanent photo-radar cameras have been installed.

He cited Walkley Road, which leads to four elementary schools but isn't a school zone.

Still, Brockington said, "Walkley Road is where the children cross."

Photo radar cameras sit like vultures waiting for aggressive speeders. CHRIS CHIDSEY/FREEIMAGES

He said the city should be able to deploy radar based on speed data and collision rates.

Gloucester South-Nepean Coun. Michael Qaqish even asked committee chairman Keith Egli to broaden the motion to that effect, but Egli shot down that suggestion.

Egli said data from the two-year school zone pilot is necessary to prove photo radar is effective.

Staff already have a lot of data: they outlined Wednesday how programs in Calgary, Edmonton, Winnipeg and Gatineau have led to drastic decreases in collision rates and fatalities.

In Gatineau, for example, collision rates dropped 58 per cent where permanent cameras were installed.

Council will debate the issue May 11.

PROVINCIAL POLITICS

Liberals facing new police investigation

Ontario's Liberal government faces another criminal investigation, after a wind power company complained to police about the alleged destruction of documents in a lawsuit it filed against the province.

Trillium Power Wind Corp. has alleged in a lawsuit that government officials destroyed documents after the company sued in a case that stemmed from the government's cancellation of a Lake Ontario wind project.

OPP Det.-Supt. Dave Truax would not say that the allegations in the related police investigation are about destruction of documents, but that the probe is looking into elected officials and/or civil servants, and that there is a "co-mingling" of issues with Trillium's civil suit.

Trillium lawyer Morris Cooper alleges the documents were destroyed around the same time as emails are alleged to have been deleted in relation to the Liberals' cancellation of two gas plants.

None of Trillium's allegations has been proven in court.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

WELCOME FUND

Refugees get boost

Lucy Scholey
Metro | Ottawa

Community groups in Ottawa are getting a $450,000 boost to help newly landed Syrian refugees pay for housing and rent.

The Community Foundations of Canada, which represents 191 community foundations across the country, announced the "welcome fund" donation on Wednesday.

The money – granted to the Catholic Centre for Immigrants, the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization and World Skills — will be used to subsidize Syrian refugees' rent fees or resolve any landlord issues. It will also be used to provide mental health services and help with the job hunt, including language training.

Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump is joined by his wife Melania, right, daughter Ivanka, left, and son Eric, background left, as he speaks during a primary night news conference on Tuesday. MARY ALTAFFER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Trump victorious

U.S. ELECTION

Last GOP rivals withdraw before populist juggernaut

Donald Trump's last Republican foe, Ohio Gov. John Kasich, ended his quixotic presidential campaign Wednesday, cementing Trump's remarkable triumph as his party's presumptive nominee and launching him toward a likely fall battle with Hillary Clinton. Some reluctant Republicans began to rally around Trump, but others agonized over their party's future.

The billionaire businessman vowed to unite the splintered GOP, even as he was bitingly dismissive of members who have been critical of his campaign.

"Those people can go away and maybe come back in eight years after we served two terms," he said on NBC's Today show. "Honestly, there are some people I really don't want."

Clinton, in her first remarks since Trump's new status was crystallized, said she was more than prepared to handle the kind of deeply personal attacks that helped defeat Trump's Republican rivals.

"To me, this is the classic case of a blustering, bullying guy," the all-but-certain Democratic nominee told CNN.

The long and chaotic Republican primary came to an abrupt end after Trump's decisive victory Tuesday in Indiana. His win pushed Texas Sen. Ted Cruz, his closest rival, out of the race, with Kasich following on Wednesday.

"The people of our country changed me," Kasich said during an emotional speech announcing the end of his campaign. "They changed me with the stories of their lives."

> **To me, this is the classic case of a blustering, bullying guy.**
> Hillary Clinton

Trump's takeover of the GOP marks one of the most stunning political feats in modern political history. A first-time candidate, he eschewed traditional fundraising and relied more on his own star power than television advertising to draw attention. He flouted political decorum with controversial statements about women and minorities, leaving some Republicans convinced he won't be able to cobble together the diverse coalition needed to win the general election.

"It's his party between now and November, but I don't think it's going to be his party after November," said Peter Wehner, a former adviser to President George W. Bush. Wehner is among the Republicans vowing to never vote for Trump, even if that means essentially handing Clinton the presidency.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

MIGRATION

EU offers Turks mobility in exchange for refugee control

The European Union pressed ahead Wednesday with efforts to persuade Turkey to stop asylum seekers from reaching Europe and take back thousands more by offering Turkish citizens the prospect of visa-free travel within the bloc.

Mindful of Turkey's pivotal role in managing Europe's refugee crisis, the European Commission said Ankara has met all but five of the 72 criteria needed to end visa requirements. It invited member states and EU lawmakers to endorse the move by June 30, even though some conditions remain to be fulfilled.

Once endorsed, Turkish citizens would be able to travel for 90 days without a visa to all EU member countries — except for Britain and Ireland, which have provisions for opting out of such policies — and four members of the Schengen passport-free travel area: Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway and Switzerland.

That deal has raised legal and ethical questions, as European nations unable to agree among themselves about how to handle the refugee emergency chose instead to outsource it to Turkey, where almost 3 million refugees are staying, most of them people fleeing war in Syria. It also comes as concern grows about Turkey's commitment to human rights and free speech amid a crackdown on the media and dissent.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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metro VIEWS
Your essential daily news
Thursday, May 5, 2016

RUSSELL WANGERSKY: WE'RE WITH YOU, FORT MCMURRAY

One thing you can say about our history of moving west for work? It stretches families far apart, but it weaves us together across a big country.

They're talking about Fort McMurray on the St. John's, N.L. Metrobus.

People don't usually talk much on the Metrobus, you understand. But they're talking today, and it's a conversation being heard across the Atlantic provinces, from Tim Hortons in Sydney to small towns in the Annapolis Valley. A simple trip online finds reporters from Newfoundland to Charlottetown to Halifax asking Atlantic Canadians in Alberta to get in touch.

The talk started Tuesday night with the first evacuation order in Fort McMurray. Social media lit up with first-hand tweets and Facebook posts about the fire. Soon, there was a complete evacuation, video showing the fire terrifyingly close, and people at this end of the country posting information about how to make telephone donations to the Red Cross.

On Wednesday, fire officials were watching the weather, expecting wind, and posting grim lists of the areas hardest hit by the advancing fire: "Beacon Hill — 80 per cent loss of homes; Timberlea — 12 trailers lost on Mckinlay Cres."

For so many East Coast workers and their families, Fort McMurray is a long way west, but also the worksite next door.

The oilpatch may be slowing, but it's far from stopped: scores of Atlantic Canadians either travel there for work or have moved to the northern Alberta city, putting down roots. Some people (not completely glibly) call it Newfoundland and Labrador's second largest city. Cape Breton could say the same.

It's the great class equalizer on many East Coast flights: workers sometimes use their frequent flyer status to move up into first class, bringing baseball caps and work jackets into the rarefied land of Air Canada's Zone 1.

Fort McMurray is far closer than geography suggests.

HANG IN THERE **You don't have to tell people on the East Coast about the devastation in Alberta** — the oilpatch is 'as near as a nephew or niece,' Russell Wangersky writes.
MICHAEL DE ADDER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

It also means that Fort McMurray is far closer than geography suggests.

By Wednesday morning, Edmonton was expecting 20,000 evacuees, and thousands more had gone north. It's an evacuation of astounding proportions and it's touching people across this region quickly, people wondering and worrying about friends and family on the move.

How close to home is Fort Mac to people on the East Coast? You don't have to tell anyone here about it — it's as near as a nephew or niece.

At The Telegram in St. John's, the news editor reposted Tweets in almost real-time from his nephews, their car turned around by a transformer explosion and forced north out of the city.

One of The Telegram's reporters used to work at Fort McMurray Today, the city's main newspaper; his daughter, born in the Alberta city, made her parents turn off the television because she can't watch the fire burning places she knows.

And there's this exchange, posted on Facebook by my niece, recounting a conversation with her four-year-old about my niece's sister in Fort McMurray:

"Mommy what's going on?"

"It's a fire, sweetheart."

"Is Auntie Christina OK?"

"Yes buddy."

"Does she still have a bed?"

"I don't think so, sweet pea."

"It's OK mommy. She can sleep here in my bed."

In the office next to mine, an editor hasn't slept, following a friend's journey — husband, wife, seven-year-old twins and the family dog — north out of Fort McMurray, into huge highway gridlock, then south again, taking their chances along a previously closed highway, until there's a 1:30 a.m. post saying they are safely out of range of the fire: "We were 8 hrs in our car and finally made it out ... It's surreal to not know what exactly we are facing in the next few days."

One thing you can say about our history of moving west for work?

It stretches families far apart but it weaves us together across a big country, as well.

I remember, years ago, talking to a woman who ran a lounge in a small town on the southern tip of Newfoundland's Avalon Peninsula. The town was too small to keep the lounge running, so it was closed most of the time. We were in an airplane, heading west, but she'd flown east to open the lounge for a wake.

She lived in Fort McMurray, working as a manager in a hardware store. Her husband was driving a dump truck at Syncrude — her son, too. At the time, one daughter was working at a rape crisis centre, the other at a vet's office.

Every time there was a wedding or a funeral, she'd fly home to open the only lounge in the area.

There are ties that go both ways, regardless of the distance. And Fort Mac is on Eastern Canadian minds and lips today.

Russell Wangersky is the Atlantic region columnist for TC Media.

ROSEMARY WESTWOOD

metro*view*

Of course Alberta's wildfire is political. Everything is political.

Burnt-out cars, charred and flattened homes, air soft with smoke in a grey-hued sunrise. The fire had eaten much on its first terrible day, before growing ever wilder and uncontrolled.

"It was just like an apocalypse," one man told CBC Radio, of the walls of flame that lined the highways and kissed the treetops and the black inferno sky above Fort McMurray: the heart of the oilsands.

Until submerged in a fire of biblical proportions, Fort Mac had long functioned as a kind of shorthand for Alberta vs. Canada animosity. The place where bitumen was squeezed from sand, imagined and unvisited by most Canadians who nonetheless hold some opinion about our economic dependence on the oil industry and the threat of climate change.

(Never mind that Fort Mac runs on the work of average Canadians, the brains of the oilsands reside elsewhere.)

Local fire chief Darby Allen called it a "nasty, dirty" fire, adjectives uttered in the past to describe the belabored way oil companies extract their resource from the land, transforming it.

And that metaphor, of Fort McMurray as the heart of oilsands darkness, was on the minds of some as the fire broke: "I'm glad the #FortMacFire is happening in the province most responsible for causing climate change that caused the fire in the first place," tweeted one Vancouver man, displaying gross callousness, even if many others had already, silently, seen a terrible irony.

Far more measured was Elizabeth May who, pressed by reporters, called it "a disaster that is very related to the global climate crisis," according to the National Observer.

Most perversely, some even accused a "disgusting" Alberta Premier Rachel Notley of using the fire to appear to care about an oil town in a display of crass opportunism.

The larger story, of course, has been national dismay at the unfolding tragedy and an unusually united amount of love flowing towards the oil rigs.

But wistful calls for everyone to set aside politics ring false. A wildfire may be indiscriminate, but people and places are always political. Inevitably, they taint events, and they will taint this, too.

Before it is satiated, the fire will devastate tens of thousands of people, and the miracle is that no one has died.

The politics is, as always, as you see it. As for any kind of reckoning, the most important is to come, when those forced to flee return to tally what is left of their lives.

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You are not what you do

INTERVIEW

Chasing a dream job becomes futile for character

Melita Kuburas
Metro | Canada

A friend and former colleague who works in journalism once explained her theory about the difference between a "dream job" and a "fantasy job."

The dream job is attainable; it's something you work towards, she says. A fantasy job is what you wish you were doing when you're totally burnt out. (Hers was municipal parks worker. Mine? Marine biologist.)

But for many adults who don't have a defined career path, the dream job, too, might as well be imaginary.

That's the case in Not Working, the first novel from Lisa Owens, 30, in which the main character Claire Flannery quits a "creative communications" job she dislikes to figure out what she really wants to do. Claire's time off is spent loitering in coffee shops, pressuring busy friends into just *one more* drink at the bar, and watching grotesque online videos.

"She has this grand idea that it's going to be this journey of self-discovery that she can direct, and that she can make herself a better person. Instead it becomes this introspective time of inertia," says Owens.

Her character is smart but self-destructive — a lovable screwball with knack for pointed observation, even in a hungover state.

"Did you not even get *dressed*?" asks Claire's boyfriend, a doctor, as he comes home to find her re-watching a clip of a sperm whale being dissected. By this point, she has given up on Ulysses.

The idea for the story was partly influenced by a stretch of time off Owens had in between jobs a few years ago.

"I was going to go to all these art galleries and do all of this cultural stuff," says Owens. In reality, she watched a lot of TV and met friends for lunch, which wasn't fun because unlike her, they were busy.

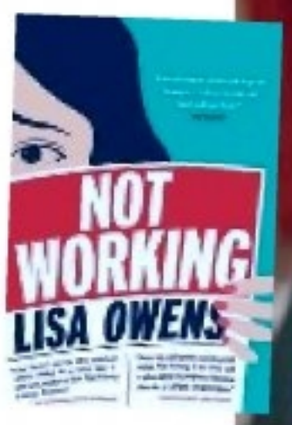
"I was very much aware that everyone else I knew was working on a different clock. If I hadn't had a job to go back to, how would that have felt?" she says, of how the idea formed.

One impact of this ideleness on Claire is anxiety — she inspects every mole with the same suspicion she applies to her well-meaning boyfriend's attempt at words of encouragement.

Without a job and daily routine, everything else suddenly starts to come into question, says Owens, and they do for Claire. Should she be going to the gym more? Is it too late to have children? Does she even like living in London?

The character is in her late twenties, though her exact age is never specified in the book. She's relatable to anyone who has ever dreaded the question "So what do you do?" at a party.

"I think there's a certain pressure on my generation to think that you should feel like, this amazing sense of fulfillment in your day job and I think it can actually be quite dangerous and quite tough … on people like Claire, who don't really know what that is," says Owens.



The danger, she adds, is they may feel like they're wasting away their potential by working a job that's just a 9 to 5.

"So that was definitely something I wanted to challenge — that idea that 'oh, you should just be absolutely loving everything you do.'"

Chasing a dream job, then, is probably a waste of time — it doesn't necessarily exist, says Owens.

There is a lot of pressure on her generation to find that "**dream job,**" even though that ideal 9-to-5 doesn't exist, says author **Lisa Owens, 30.** COURTESY ALEXANDER JAMES

Stories of the variety store

DEBUT NOVEL

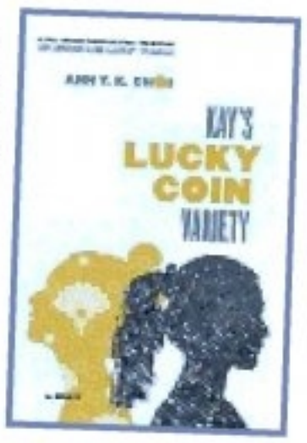
Author sheds light on Korean immigrant experience

Sue Carter
For Metro Canada

Sometimes it takes a little push from an unlikely place to fulfil a personal dream. For Ann Choi, a guidance counsellor at a Toronto high school, it came in 2007 when she asked a struggling student what he wanted to do with his life. He responded by asking her the same question right back. Not wanting to be a hypocrite, Choi answered quickly. After all, she knew exactly what she wanted: to write a book.

Choi also knew exactly what she wanted to write. Since the early 1990s, she had been holding onto story ideas about the Korean immigrant experience, specifically those of young women who felt torn between the demands of their parents and the desire to be a "typical" Canadian teenager.

"There was a lot of frustration with cultural expectations," Choi says. "And a lot of frustration with our mothers. We felt a sense of burden because 90 per cent or more of our parents were variety-store owners."



A composite of those women, and her own life, became the inspiration for Mary — or Yu-Rhee — the protagonist of Choi's debut novel, Kay's Lucky Coin Variety, published by Simon & Schuster Canada. Mary, who lives above her parents' convenience store, struggles with hormonally charged teenage emotions and experiences, but still must act like an adult.

"When other kids got to hang out at the mall after school, most of us were stamping packages of instant soup or working the cash register," Choi says.

For those in the community, Kay's Lucky Coin Variety will resonate in its accuracy and details.

While growing up, Choi loved the intersection of people that came into her family's store, but it could also be a very scary place, as her character Mary learns.

"I wanted to capture all this," Choi says. "The Korean variety-store generation is now dying off. Our parents sacrificed and put us through school and now, my brothers and I, we don't work in variety stores anymore."

Sue Carter is the editor at Quill & Quire magazine.

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JOHANNA SCHNELLER
WHAT I'M WATCHING

Good Witch is dangerous treacle

THE SHOW: Good Witch, Season 2, Episode 2 (W)
THE MOMENT: Cassie's advice

Cassie Nightingale (Catherine Bell), who magically sells customers whatever they need, is training a new salesgirl in her store (or rather, shoppe), Bell Book and Candle — located on Main Street in Middleton, USA, where it's always Christmas or Halloween. The salesgirl had some accident with her hands, which prevents her from pursuing her dream job. (Or something like that. I might have dozed off. Trust me, it doesn't matter.)

"How can I help?" the salesgirl asks.

"Oh, there's always something to be done at the Bell Book and Candle," Cassie says, smiling enigmatically.

Sure enough, the salesgirl solders a glass box. She's cured!

I have to apologize to the women of North America. I knew you were tired, but I didn't know you were this tired. The only reason anyone could watch this show is that they're so stressed, they need this tranquilizer in television form.

Every moment of the series is the same moment, engineered to lull viewers into a Chardonnay coma: Somebody asks Cassie what he/she should do, and she smiles enigmatically (her sole expression, because her face is frozen stiff).

I actually worry about Good Witch falling into the wrong hands — this is some weapons-grade treacle. Vladimir Putin could become the showrunner, bore us into submissive somnolence, and take over Canada while we nap.

So if you're ever on the subway home thinking, "I'm so wrung out, maybe I'll watch Good Witch," call me instead and I'll come brush your hair. No one should be this tired.

Johanna Schneller is a media connoisseur who zeroes in on pop-culture moments. She appears Monday through Thursday.

The Good Witch has Cassie Nightingale smiling enigmatically — a lot. CONTRIBUTED

Husband and wife team share Good Wife secrets

INTERVIEW

As series is about to wrap, couple talks their trade

As The Good Wife comes in for a landing after seven seasons, it finds its namesake heroine, Alicia Florrick, facing the same dilemma as when it began: defending her husband, now the governor of Illinois, who is mired in a scandal that could send him back to prison.

Will this crisis reunite Alicia (played by Julianna Margulies) with Peter (Chris Noth), from whom she's been estranged as he awaits a jury's verdict? Or will she finally divorce the man who, in the series' 2009 premiere, was the disgraced Chicago-area state's attorney heading to prison for corruption involving prostitutes? After all these years as a dutiful lawyer, mother and wife, what will be Alicia's future path?

All presumably will be revealed when The Good Wife concludes Sunday at 9 p.m. EDT on CBS and Global. A legal drama and much more, The Good Wife has been that rare program on a mainstream broadcast network that could stand alongside the cable-network exotica certifying television's new golden age.

The Good Wife has always been genre-defying, neither a copy of anything that came before or, thus far, tempting any programmer to try to copy it.

How could that be?

Will The Good Wife's current crisis reunite Alicia with Peter? CONTRIBUTED

Robert and Michelle King — the show's creators and husband-and-wife team recently mused on what made The Good Wife so good.

A robust universe of characters

It's "really tricky" to maintain, said Michelle. "You tell serialized stories with not just your core cast, but with ancillary characters who aren't regular, and you don't have access to those actors on a regular basis. But we wanted to be able to tell what's going on not only with Alicia, say, but also with her mom (Stockard Channing) and her brother (Dallas Roberts)," just two of the show's countless recurring characters. "It becomes a real challenge for everyone in the production to juggle all those actors' schedules."

Splendid actors inhabiting complex roles

"The writing sets a tone for the actors and then gets out of the way," said Robert. "For instance, in our fourth-ever episode we needed an antagonist, but instead of a mean and angry male lawyer, we thought, 'What if it's a pregnant woman, and what if she uses her pregnancy to break up depositions whenever she wants to: "I feel a pain!"'

"Then we brought in Martha Plimpton, who sent that idea into the stratosphere. THEN we needed to have her back, because we wanted to know more of who this character is and more of what Martha would do with it."

Soap with sophistication

The narrative digs deep. At the same time, it snacks on melodrama as viewers join the show's creators in having their cake and eating it too. "We want the actors to have real reactions, even to ludicrous events," Robert said.

"In the beginning, viewers were commenting on how the lawyers kept winning cases, which is not very realistic.

"So in the third season, we decided they would start getting prosecuted for (possibly) bribing judges. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

THE MANY FACES OF MARCIA CLARK

The People v. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story

The Ryan Murphy-produced anthology series starred Sarah Paulson (American Horror Story) as Clark. Her performance was critically lauded and more sentimental than earlier portrayals.

Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt

The Netflix series brought on co-creator Tina Fey and comedian Jerry Minor for three episodes as Clark and Chris Darden in harsh portrayals as buffoons.

American Tragedy

Lawrence Schiller brought his own book to the TV screen in 2000 with this made-for-TV movie, which focused more on the defence team and had Diana LaMar playing Clark.

Saturday Night Live

Always poised to tackle current events, SNL parodied the trial in the '90s, featuring comedians Laura Kightlinger and Nancy Carell (née Walls).

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

How Marcia went from punchline to real person

CRIME

Former O.J. Simpson prosecutor now an author

In the televised "15-month nightmare" that was the O.J. Simpson trial, Marcia Clark woke up beaten. "I was just so burnt out. I was emotionally depleted, physically depleted," says the former prosecutor. "I couldn't even conceive of walking back into the courtroom."

She became a kind of punchline, the lawyer who bungled the Trial of the Century, a perceived slam dunk. From Saturday Night Live skits in the 1990s to a Tina Fey parody on Unbreakable Kimmy Schmidt last year, Clark was a long-running joke.

But more than 20 years later, she's newly venerated, thanks to the FX miniseries depicting her courtroom nightmare: American Crime Story, in which actress Sarah Paulson played the former prosecutor to much acclaim, including Clark's. "We are now understood more like real people instead of cartoons," says Clark, who credits the popular series for adding "more layers" to her media portrayal, going behind the scenes with her and legal partner Chris Darden, whom she calls her "rock" during the trial.

"Whenever there's a major public event that gets covered for a period of time everybody kind of winds up being caricatured. That happened to all of us, too."

The anthology series ended its first season in April, but the year is just beginning for Clark, who has become a successful crime novelist. Her latest is called Blood Defense and follows a criminal defence lawyer handling a high-profile double-murder case, which Clark knows a thing or two about.

The O.J. Simpson trial began in 1994 after the murders of Simpson's ex-wife, Nicole Brown Simpson, and waiter Ron Goldman. Simpson was acquitted of all charges after a defence team led by Johnnie Cochran presented the argument he'd been framed by a racist LAPD, a strategy that many feel distracted from the victims.

For Clark, the high-profile trial meant public scrutiny. Naturally, watching the show brought on a "weird mix of emotions," she says. "It's very difficult to go back and remember everything. It digs up all the memories; the pain and the sadness."

She'll be reminded again in June, when CTV and ESPN air a new doc, O.J.: Made in America.

But a silver lining for the formerly misunderstood attorney is that she's become a kind of millennial idol with the FX series. Many of the show's viewers were in diapers when the trial made headlines. They're watching with a different, "much hipper" perspective than their parents, Clark has noticed. She's not a punch line anymore but a trailblazer.

As for the man at the centre of her televised nightmare two decades ago, Simpson is in prison on unrelated charges and is eligible for parole in 2017.

Is there any doubt in Clark's mind that he committed those murders in 1994? "How could there be any?" she asks. "None."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Marcia Clark, former O.J. Simpson prosecutor, has a new book out called Blood Defense, the same year that FX miniseries American Crime Story brought the Trial of the Century back into the spotlight. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The gift of her

Henrietta Walmark

“Trying to keep up with her fierce intelligence and wild streak has reshaped my life. This Mother's Day, I'll celebrate the great adventure of being her mum.

An annual ritual I share with my ex-husband amuses our daughter, Sofia. On Mother's Day, he thanks me for the gift of her. And I reciprocate on Father's Day. Best thing we ever did, her father and I say to one another in earnest, to eye rolls from the object of our affection.

Sofia was 10 when her dad and I split up, but the tradition of gratitude continued with the three of us gathering for Mother's Day brunches at a local restaurant, a favourite place where we celebrated family occasions and milestones until her father moved to Indonesia six years ago.

Being Sofia's 'mum' — a British-ism acquired honestly from her very English granny — has meant having an ongoing and affectionate relationship with her dad.

That she thanks us for setting an example of mutual respect is more satisfying than any gift or a decadent meal. Which is just as well, as she is 1,400 km away studying at university and we won't be seeing each other for Mother's Day this year.

Still our mother-daughter connection runs deep. I was invited to her over-the-top 30th birthday bash last month where all the other guests were 20-something. I had a blast. The party pushed me out of my comfort zone, like so many experiences we've shared.

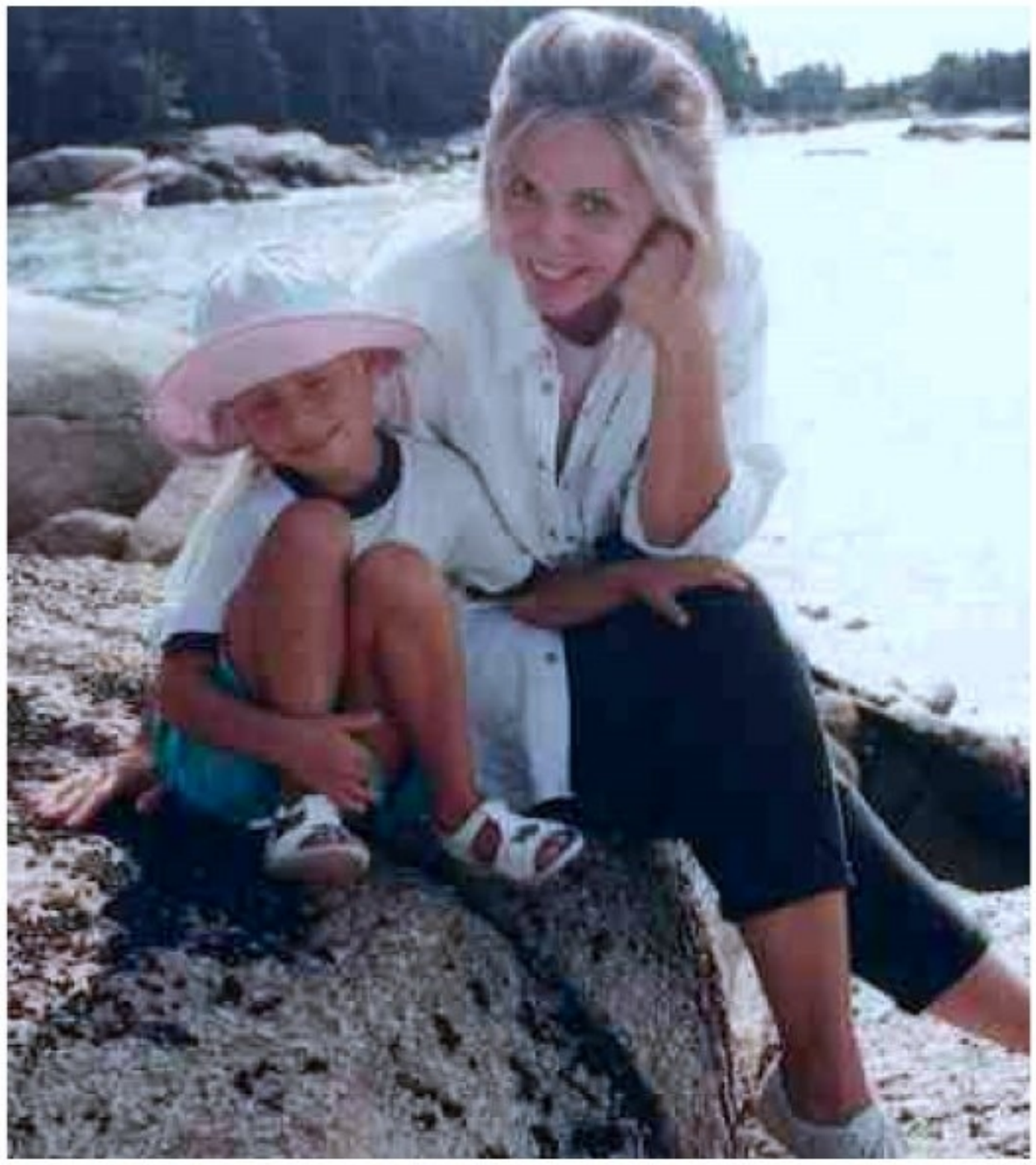
I ventured into new neighbourhoods and venues at all hours when teenage Sofia's plans went awry. She still apologizes to me for those particularly challenging years.

She introduced arty me to the beauty of pure mathematics and physics, which is what you might expect from a kid who has Euler's equation inked on the inside of her wrist.

Thanks to Sofia, I was no bourgeois soccer mom; I was a circus mom. After several years on the sidelines watching as my preteen daughter mastered flying trapeze, I was coaxed into trying it myself and then kept at it for eight years.

Trying to keep up with her fierce intelligence and wild streak has reshaped my life. This Mother's Day, I'll celebrate the great adventure of being her mum. I'll mourn a second pregnancy that ended in miscarriage. I'll think of friends who long for a child yet can't conceive, and of those who have lost their mothers. I'll remember the deep affection I shared with my former mother-in-law and her long-time companion. I'll recall last year's sweet and unexpected Mother's Day call from my former son-in-law. And I'll spend the day with my amazing mom.

Oh, and I'll be waiting to hear from Sofia's dad. I'll smile to think of Sofia rolling her eyes even though she won't be here when he thanks me yet again for the gift of her.



Henrietta Walmark with daughter Sofia — then 5, now 30 — in Maine together in 1991. CONTRIBUTED

Something a little unexpected

You've given her the tulips, a big box of chocolates, you've even wrapped up some bath salts, body wash or scented soaps. All lovely sentiments for Mother's Day. This year you're looking to give something more unique. Astrid Van Den Broek shares some ideas.

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On Mother's Day, destination spas see a significant number of guests who are mothers and daughters. COURTESY OF ST. ANNES SPA

What mom wants most: memories

Vawn Himmelsbach

Sure, flowers and chocolates are nice, but what do moms really want this Mother's Day? A survey by Ebates found that 63 per cent of moms want to spend quality time with their family this Mother's Day, while one-third say they'd like a spa day. And take note: a whopping 94 per cent say they absolutely do not want a gym membership.

Whether a spa day, weekend retreat or last-minute trip, a getaway with mom isn't just about giving her some much-needed time off; it also provides bonding time with family away from the pressures of everyday life.

Judi Oracheski, owner of Gypsy Group Travel Inc. in Halifax, says she's had quite a few moms and daughters (as well as sisters) book getaways to Las Vegas, since it's an ideal destination for shopping and shows, and easily accessible from most of Canada. With a seat sale or hotel promo, a Vegas getaway can also be reasonably priced, she said.

And in May, there are typically last-minute deals to Caribbean isles such as the Dominican Republic and Cuba, as those destinations head into their off-season.

Other getaways can be tailored to mom's interests, such as theatre, arts or music. Oracheski booked a mother and daughter on a Broadway-themed trip to New York City, for example, which included tickets to Wicked and Mamma Mia.

But you don't have to leave the country to get away. "My mom and I did a three-night getaway to Quebec City once," said Oracheski. "We stayed in the Chateau Frontenac and felt like royalty. It was awesome!"

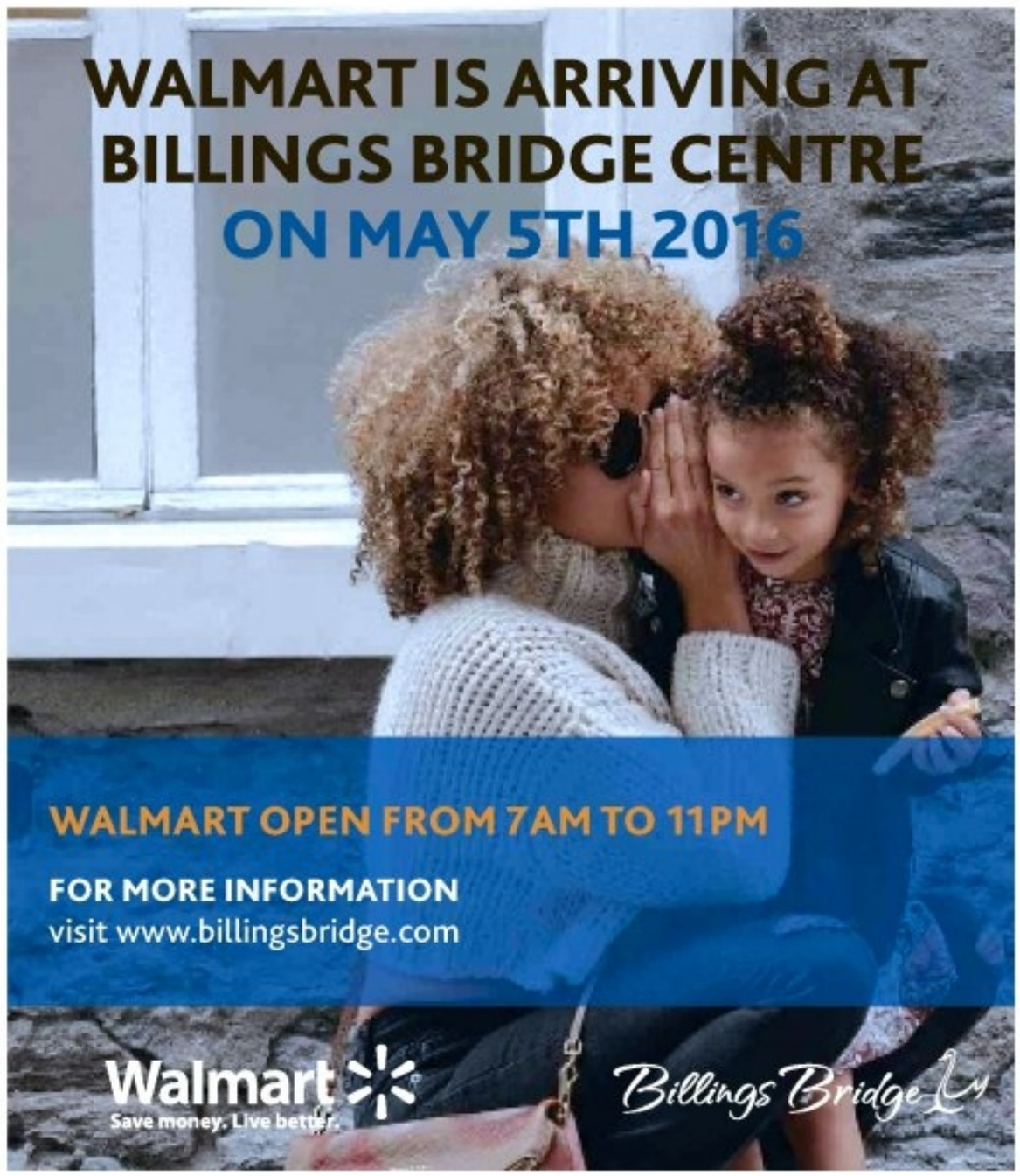
At Ste. Anne's Spa in Grafton, Ont., a significant number of guests are mothers and daughters. "However, we certainly do see an increase in the month of May," said Wanda Hoehn, the spa's director of sales and marketing. She's also seeing more multi-generational visits, with daughter, mother and grandmother.

"At a place like ours, there are really no outside distractions like phones or work and family pressures," said Hoehn. "You have the opportunity for such quality one-on-one time here, all the while enjoying soothing spa treatments, comforting cuisine and beautiful surroundings. When you are in a state of true relaxation, I think the most genuine bonding happens."

For the month of May, Ste. Anne's Spa is offering an overnight getaway that includes its popular 'maple showers' treatment (and spas across Canada are offering various Mother's Day specials and promos).

For Mother's Day, though, Hoehn recommends purchasing a gift certificate for two.

"I always think a spa retreat together is the best gift that you can give," said Hoehn, "as not only do you give the gift of relaxation, which all of us need regularly, but you give the gift of time with you — which invariably moms will cherish the most."



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MOTHER'S DAY IS SUNDAY, MAY 8TH
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Tech mom out for Mother's Day

GADGETY GIFTS

Seven great gadget gift ideas to keep her connected

Marc Saltzman

Chocolates are sweet and flowers are thoughtful, but given the fact geek is the new chic, why not pick up mom a gadgety gift for Mother's Day?

After all, today's busy moms could probably use a high-tech hand while on the go, whether it's to stay organized, entertained or in touch with those who matter.

And unlike a spa treatment, a tech toy lasts more than an hour.

If you need some suggestions for Sunday, May 8, the following are some gadget gift ideas – ranging in price from $59 to $549.

For the workaholic

Can't decide whether mom could benefit from a laptop or tablet? You don't need to choose with the Dell Inspiron 11 3000 (from $499.99), a versatile two-in-one that transforms from one mode to another. When you no longer need a keyboard and trackpad, simply bend back the 11-inch screen 360 degrees and use your fingertips on the touchscreen to swipe through movies, TV shows, ebooks, games, and photos. Powered by a 6th Gen Intel Core processor, this hybrid also enjoys long battery life of up to seven hours between charges.

For the bookworm

"Books are a uniquely portable magic," said Stephen King – and you can give the gift of magic with an ebook reader for avid readers. In fact, the Kobo Aura H20 ($179) is the first premium waterproof ereader, so it can be brought into the tub, by the pool, or to the beach. The anti-glare e-ink screen can be read clearly in bright sunlight, or take advantage of the integrated light to read while curled up in bed, rather than disturbing a sleepy partner with a night table lamp.

The Kobo eBookstore features more than four million titles, plus you can borrow ebooks for free from your local library. Battery life lasts tops two months between charges.

For creative types

Whether mom's a budding photographer, artist, writer or scrapbooker, the Epson Expression ET-2550 EcoTank All-in-One ($399) lets you print for up to two years before you need to refill the ink tanks. Yes, you read that correctly. This Wi-Fi-enabled printer/scanner/copier has an ink yield of 4,000 black and 6,500 colour prints, and can print up to 9.2 pages per minute for black and 4.5 pages for colour. And when it's time to replace the ink, each bottle only costs $18 per colour.

For the coffee lover

How nice would it be to wake up, reach for your phone or tablet and tap an app that tells your coffee machine to make you that perfect cup of Jo?

It's possible with the Nespresso OriginalLine Prodigio (from $269), the first smartphone-connected machine from the Swiss company. Using Bluetooth technology, the machine seamlessly links with the Nespresso app to allow you to prepare coffee remotely with just a few taps, plus it also helps with capsule stock management, brewing schedules, maintenance alerts, and more.

For fitness fanatics

If you think your exercise-loving mom would appreciate a more comprehensive fitness tracker than what she's using now, HTC and Under Armour have partnered to create UA HealthBox ($549), a connected health system that tracks and manages your activity, fitness, sleep, and nutrition. In the box you get a wearable UA Band (for the wrist), a UA Heart Rate monitor (with chest strap), and a smart UA Scale (measuring weight and body fat) — all of which connect wirelessly to the UA Record companion app for Android or Apple iOS.

Each device sends data to your device, illustrated on a dashboard within the app, plus you're provided with information and motivation to help achieve fitness and health goals.

For the 'socially connected' mom

Mom may want a smartwatch, but she doesn't want to sacrifice style for functionality. Engineered by HP, the Isaac Mizrahi Smartwatch ($299.99) is available in two Swarovski Crystal-outlined faces in silver and gold-tone stainless steel, and the leather strap is available in five interchangeable colours. Compatible with both iOS and Android phones, this classic watch may have an classic analog face, but it shows message notifications (calls, texts, emails), real-time calendar alerts, social media updates, pedometer and other fitness info, and much more.

For mom with a green thumb

Newsflash: Bluetooth can help your green thumb. The Parrot Flower Power Wireless Plant Sensor ($59.95) is a smart gardening gadget capable of assessing your plants' needs and sends alerts to your smartphone. Simply insert this doohickey into the soil and let its four sensors do the work. Then look at the accompanying iOS or Android app for real-time info related to sunlight exposure, soil moisture, temperature, humidity and drainage.

1 Epson Expression ET-2550 EcoTank All-in-One, $399.
2 Isaac Mizrahi Smartwatch, $299.99.
3 Dell Inspiron 11 3000, from $499.99.
4 Nespresso OriginalLine Prodigio, from $269.
5 UA HealthBox, $549.

metro HOME

Your essential daily news

Fiberglass igloos being used by Hawaiian church as form of non-profit housing

MEET THE CONDO

Stunning views

HILLSIDE VISTA IN ORLÉANS

CONTRIBUTED

Project overview

Hillside Vista is a neighbourhood of townhomes that are staggered up a hill, allowing each home to have an unblocked view of the Gatineau Hills. Homeowners have moved into the first three blocks, and more than half of the remaining blocks, which will soon be under construction, have already been sold.

Housing amenities

The Hillside Vista townhomes have great curb appeal, with brown stone fronts and French balconies. The units are three storeys high, and come with partially finished basements and a single car garage. Inside, the homes offer features such as open concept kitchens, living and dining rooms and eight-foot ceilings.

Location and transit

The site in a prime location east of Ottawa that not only offers convenient access the Place D'Orléans shopping centre, but has plenty of other local amenities as well. Overlooking the Gatineau Hills, the neighbourhood is not far from Petrie Island Beach, and is within walking distance of a main transit station.

In the neighbourhood

Orléans is just east of Ottawa, but is still highly connected to the rest of the city. The area is full of scenic places, including nature trails and the Petrie Island parkland, which is now a large beach that also includes a marina where homeowners can rent canoes or kayaks.

ILANA REIMER/FOR METRO

NEED TO KNOW

What: Hillside Vista in Orléans
Builder: Phoenix Homes
Designer: Phoenix Homes
Location: Eric Czapnik Way
Building: Townhomes
Size: 1,436 sq. ft. to 1,564 sq. ft.
Pricing: Starting at $263,500
Model: Two to three bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms
Status: Now selling
Occupancy: Late fall 2016
Sales centre: 263 Eric Czapnik Way, Orléans
Phone: 613-319-6297
Website: phoenixhomes.ca

CRAFTING

DIY heirloom tea towels for Mother's Day

Pretty tea towels are a useful addition to any kitchen and are extra special when printed with cherished family recipes.

Turn treasured recipes into thoughtful keepsake gifts perfect for Mother's Day using iron-on transfers.

Raid your family's recipe box for that treasured recipe to make these gorgeous towels.

Then wrap them up with baker's twine with a special cookbook and you've created a unique gift.

Step 1: Gather and shop for the supplies

You will need:

- A cotton or linen tea towel
- Iron-on transfers for light-coloured fabric
- Handwritten recipe
- Iron (you don't need a steam setting)
- A scanner, computer and printer

REMEMBER
Ensure that you "mirror" or "flip" the image so that it prints backwards and the recipe can be read.

Step 2: Choose a recipe and scan it into a computer

Scan the recipe. We scanned the image in colour and again in black and white. Alter the image using image software if you like.

Step 3: Print it out

Before selecting the image to be printed ensure that you remember to "mirror" or "flip" the image so that it prints backwards. When you iron it onto the fabric it will appear the correct way. Print the image onto the transfer paper according to the manufacturer's directions.

Step 4: Trim the printed design

If desired, trim the printed design, leaving approximately 1 inch (2.5 centimetres) around the printed area.

Step 5: Place and iron the design onto the tea towel

Place the printed design print side down onto the fabric. Iron the design on to the fabric according to the manufacturer's directions (do not use a steam setting).

Let cool. Carefully peel away the backing paper to reveal the design.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Writing out a recipe in your own writing, even if you got it from a cookbook, gives the tea towels a personal touch. DEBRA NORTON/FOR TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Turning crafting into a career

SKILLLS

Women at forefront of the maker movement

Women have always been an integral part of crafting culture, and now, with help from the Internet, they're taking it to the next level.

Hobbies can become thriving sidelines or full-time livelihoods. At Etsy.com, a major online crafts marketplace that launched in Brooklyn in 2005, most of the sellers are women, says Heather Jassy, a senior vice-president for the site. She says women make up 86 per cent of the site's sellers in America, 94 per cent in Australia and 91 per cent in Canada, for example.

"We hear from our sellers that they want to make a life, not just a living," she says. "Starting a creative business gives many women the opportunity not just to follow their passion, but to retain their autonomy, and build flexibility into their lives."

Greta de Parry of Chicago grew up on her dad's construction sites, poring over blueprints.

"I always knew I'd follow some kind of creative path," she says. "I just didn't know what."

In a first-year woodworking class at the Art Institute of Chicago, she fell in love with furniture making.

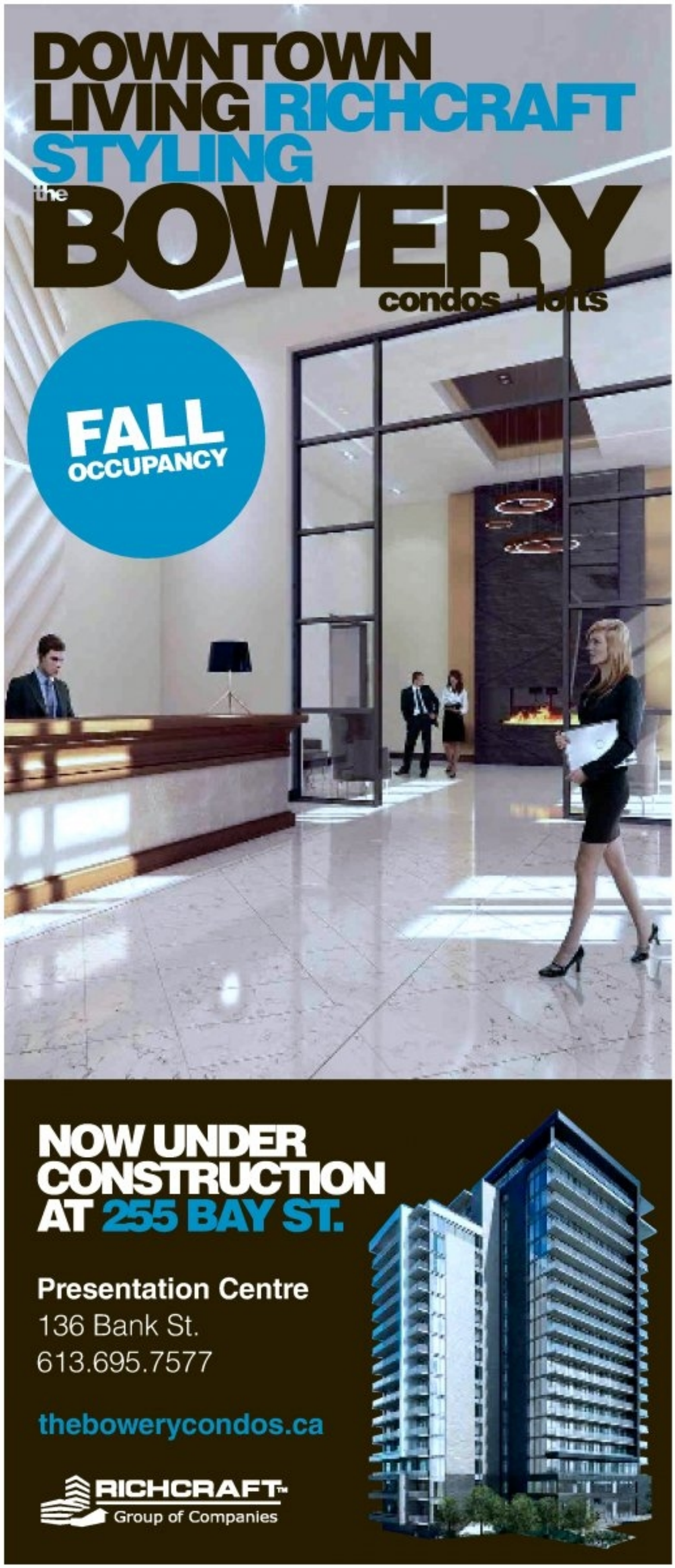
She started her own line of custom pieces in 2009, and in 2014 opened an Etsy shop.

Evan Gray Gregory of Seattle, turned her interest in woodworking into a business when she came up with a clever fix for a common problem. She'd gotten a new cat, and decided that a standard, pet-store litter box wasn't going to work.

"I couldn't find anything out there to blend with our collection of mid-century modern pieces," she said.

She designed and built a stylish litter box that drew raves from friends, and she opened Modernist Cat on Etsy in 2010. Amelia McDonell-Parry, Spin Media's editor-at-large and an amateur weaver, says Instagram has become a powerful player. "Over the last few years, a community of mostly female creators has exploded on the app, including both professional makers and on-the-side hobbyists," she says.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



First-time homebuyers tips

Plan ahead, expect the unexpected, says real-estate expert

Plan ahead when looking to buy a home by setting a budget to account for emergencies and little extras. ISTOCK

Buying your first home is an emotional time. The entire process of viewings, making offers and finally getting the keys is full of excitement, fear and anticipation. First-time homebuyers — or "property virgins," as they were called on the hit HGTV show — have a lot to learn as they navigate the real-estate waters for the first time. Erica Nielsen, VP of Home Equity Financing at RBC, offers five pieces of wisdom to help buy with confidence:

1. Know what you can afford
Many first-time buyers start their home search by asking what neighbourhood they want to live in. "This can lead to disappointment," says Nielsen. "They get their heart set on a certain neighbourhood and then find out they cannot afford it." Be realistic about what you can afford and look for homes within that price range.

2. Consider the hidden costs
There's more to the cost of owning a home than just your mortgage and utilities. "There's the first time you go to shovel your walk and realize you don't have a snow shovel," says Nielsen. While a shovel is a small expense, add to that a lawn mower to cut your grass, painting supplies, and all the miscellaneous items that come with owning a home — not to mention maintenance costs — and you could end up spending a couple of thousand dollars a year that you hadn't anticipated.

3. Seek advice from various people
Buying your first home can be a daunting experience. Surround yourself with people who can provide you with advice on everything from how to purchase your home to how to secure financing and ultimately how to maintain your property. "It's the single biggest expense you're ever going to have in your life," says Nielsen. "You need all these kinds of specialists in your community to provide you with the competence for that purchase."

4. Keep your lifestyle in mind
Mortgage payments, property taxes, insurance, utilities … all these bills and more can seriously change the lifestyle you've grown accustomed to. Consider how much you spend on entertainment, education and vacations and ask yourself what you're willing to give up to own your own home. "Sometimes that means waiting longer, saving more before you get into the market," says Nielsen, who advises first-time buyers to consider all the components that make for a satisfying life and weigh these against home ownership.

5. Look ahead
When Nielsen and her husband purchased their first home, their financial adviser asked her to consider what her life would look like several years down the road and to purchase the biggest house she could afford rather than settling for a "starter home." Nielsen sat on the sidelines for a while until she was able to save enough money to buy a family home with an extra bedroom. "That allowed us to have two children and not have to move," she says.

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A little something for everyone

There's plenty of park space in this Garden City suburb. ISTOCK

OTTAWA EAST

History, beaches, urban or suburban all in one 'hood

Jen Traplin

Whether you're looking for a home close to the centre of it all or something on a quieter, suburban street, Ottawa's eastern neighbourhoods offer a little something for everyone.

Just minutes outside of downtown Ottawa is the beautiful Rideau-Rockcliffe Ward, home to popular neighbourhoods like New Edinburgh, Manor Park and one of the country's earliest planned communities, Lindenlea, which dates back to the early 1900s.

According to the Lindenlea Community Association, the neighbourhood was designed to "be the Canadian prototype of a trendy British planning idea of the time, the Garden City suburb, a neighbourhood with curving, tree-lined streets and quiet cul de sacs, plenty of park space and tennis courts."

There is also plenty of Canadian history in neighbouring New Edinburgh, which is home to 24 Sussex Dr., the official residence of the Prime Minister, as well as Rideau Hall, the official residence of the Governor General of Canada. There are also a number of embassies and consulates in the area.

On the eastern outskirts of the city is Orléans, one of Ottawa's largest suburbs. Located along the Ottawa River and less than 20 kilometres from the downtown core, the population of Orléans has gone from just 6,000 people to well over 100,000 in the past 40 years.

The area is home to one of just four public beaches in Ottawa, Petrie Island, and will also benefit from the Stage 2 LRT project, which will include new stations at Montreal Road, Jeanne d'Arc, Orléans Boulevard and Place d'Orléans.

Ottawa *East*

Transportation: The main highway connecting Orleans to the rest of the city is Regional Road 174. The area is heavily serviced by OC Transpo and contains four Park and Rides — Jeanne d'Arc, Place d'Orleans, Trim Road and Millennium Boulevard — and Stage 2 LRT includes an extension to Place d'Orleans Shopping Centre. Residents of Manor Park, Lindenlea and New Edinburgh are serviced by a number of major OC Transpo routes and will have easy access to light rail when the first phase of Ottawa's LRT construction wraps up in 2018.

Shopping: There are plenty of shopping options in Orleans. The large Place d'Orléans shopping centre boasts more than 175 stores and conveniently sits at the edge of Highway 174. There are also a number of big-box stores along Innes Road, between Tenth Line and Mer Bleue, and along Trim Road. While there are a handful of stores along Beechwood Avenue in New Edinburgh, the busy ByWard Market, located just minutes away, offers a wide variety of unique shops as well as the recently redesigned Rideau Centre.

Schools: The most eastern neighbourhoods within the Central East ward of Rideau-Rockliffe only contain two schools — Manor Park Public School and Rockcliffe Park Public School. All of the wards' remaining schools are located south of Montreal Road. Orleans is home to seven high schools — two English Catholic, two French Catholic, one French public and two English public. The majority of the elementary schools are French.

Entertainment: Orleans is home to the beautiful Shenkman Arts Centre, a multidisciplinary arts centre includes a concert hall, art galleries and studio spaces. The suburb is also home to two popular recreation complexes — Bob MacQuarrie and Ray Friel — as well as the Petrie Island beach. After nearly 30 years in business, the New Edinburgh Pub, a local institution and popular evening destination on Beechwood Avenue, is now closed. A new Royal Oak will soon be opening in its place.

THE *Art* of Home TOUR

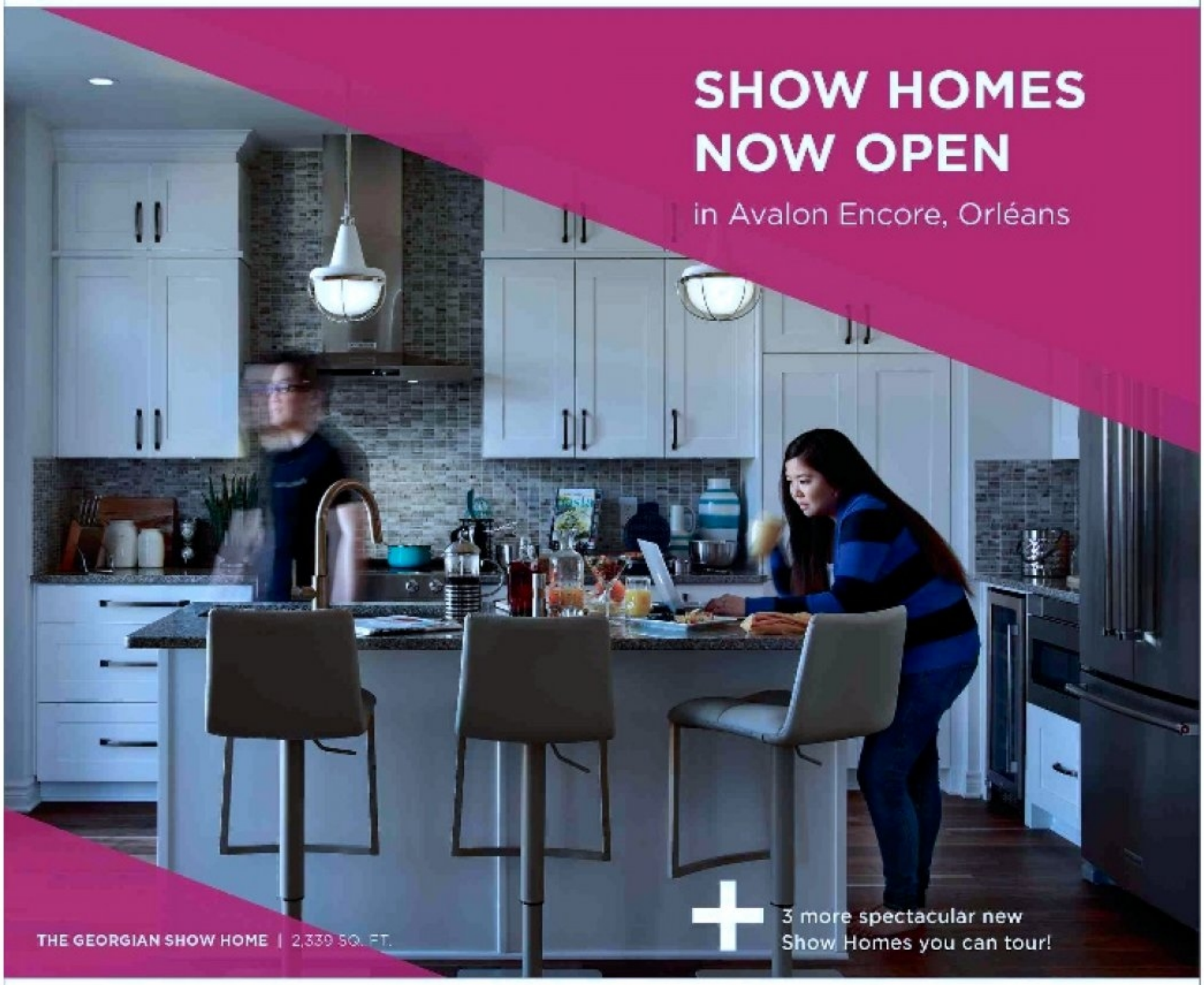
A SPECTACULAR SHOWCASE OF OTTAWA HOMES

May 14 and 15

Each week for the next 2 weeks Metro Ottawa and Metroland Media will offer you, our readers, the information you need on the neighbourhoods and builders participating in the Art of Home Tour on May 14 and 15. This showcase of new homes gives you the opportunity to follow self-guided tours of unique, innovative and attractive model homes throughout Ottawa East, South and West.

minto

mintoavalon.com



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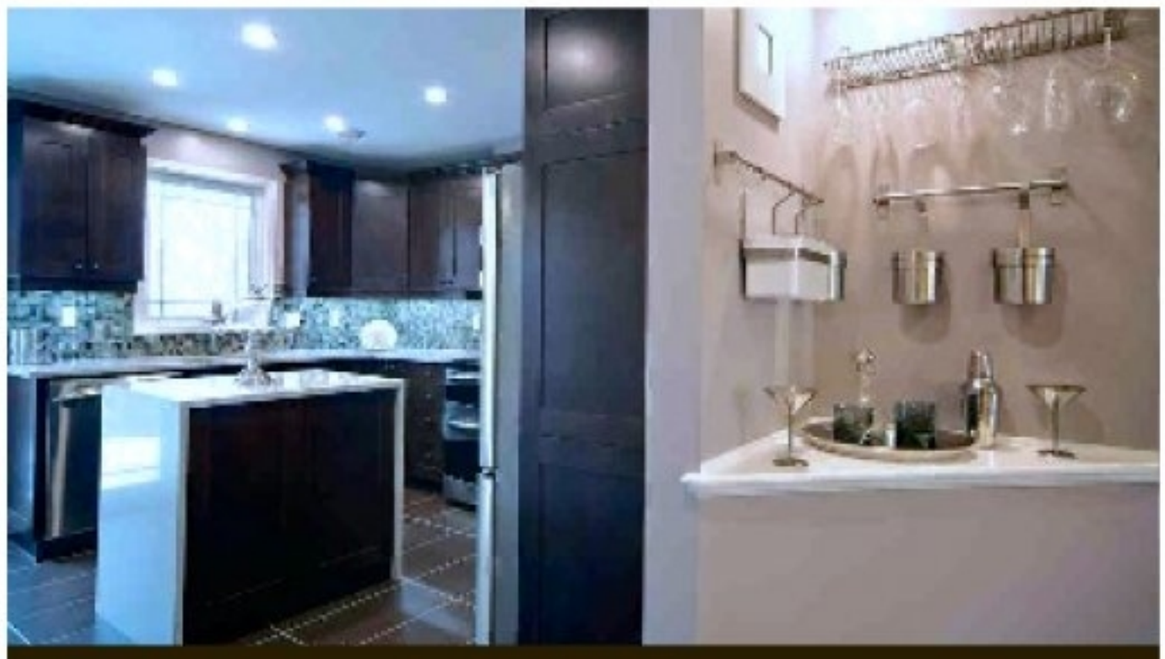

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Rendering of the Blair Road Station, which will be the most eastern point of the first phase of LRT. CONTRIBUTED

Big push to complete first LRT phase

TRANSIT

A quick and easy link to the rest of the city will be just minutes away

Jen Traplin

Now that the warmer weather has arrived, construction is ramping up again as the big push to complete the first phase of the City's light rail plan by 2018 continues.

While the lane closures and adjustments to bus routes may be cause for a bit of short-term stress, it will all be worth it soon. The City of Ottawa has declared the first phase of LRT on time and on budget.

Construction on the project has been ongoing since 2013. With everything running smoothly, it looks like the City will get its wish to have a major section of the downtown portion of the line finished in time for the 2017 celebrations next year. The remainder of the line is expected to open in 2018.

In total, the first phase of the Confederation Line will be 12.5 kilometres long, running from Blair Station to Tunney's Pasture, including a 2.5 kilometre tunnel through the downtown core.

For residents of central eastern neighbourhoods like Rockcliffe Park, New Edinburgh, Manor Park and Lindenlea, the completion of Phase 1 means a quick and easy link to the rest of the city will just be minutes away. And soon, even more eastern Ottawa residents will benefit from light rail.

The City is now turning its attention toward Stage 2, which includes three major extensions of the rail line — west, south and east.

In total, Stage 2 includes another 30 kilometres of light rail and the addition of 19 new stations. The Confederation Line East extension will see LRT continue from Blair Road to Place d'Orléans, with the potential for another 3.5 kilometre addition to Trim Road.

Construction is scheduled to begin in 2018. By the time that wraps up in 2023, the City of Ottawa says 70 percent of residents will live within five kilometres of light rail.

CONSTRUCTION

To ensure the fewest disruptions to your commute, the City of Ottawa is encouraging residents to access construction and traffic management information by visiting the City of Ottawa's interactive traffic map at ottawa.ca, calling 3-1-1 and following the City of Ottawa's traffic Twitter feed (@Ottawa_Traffic).

metro SPORTS

"I've always wanted to go against Wade in a playoff series": LeBron James eyes a possible Eastern Conference final vs. his former team

Lowry finds humour in his sad shooting stroke

RAPTORS
GAME 2 PREVIEW

All-star point guard posting a paltry 30.6 FG%

A mug shot of Kyle Lowry on a milk carton was making the rounds on social media on Wednesday.

Posted by Twitter account Fake SportsCenter, the milk carton had Lowry's smiling face under the headline: "Missing. Have you seen me? Last seen in the regular-season."

Lowry was the first to admit Wednesday that the version of himself that earned NBA all-star honours has gone AWOL. That's why he stayed on the Air Canada Centre court, headphones in, black hoodie pulled up over his head, until 1:15 a.m. after Tuesday night's overtime loss to Miami in Game 1 of their second-round playoff series.

"Just being a kid again, trying to have some fun," Lowry said of his early morning shooting session. "It was being out there and having time to reflect on things and think about the game that I grew up as a kid ... and the game I love. There were countless nights I've done that back in North Philly."

Lowry was in good spirits after Wednesday's practice, open and honest with the couple of dozen reporters in attendance. He half-heartedly joked about an unflattering stat that a Raptors media relations person had shown him: his 30.6 shooting field goal percentage is the worst in a single post-season in 50 years.

"I'll take that award, I mean it's an award ... take some type of good with it," he laughed — but followed up with a heavy sigh. "It's life. It's a basketball game, I know I can shoot better than 31 per cent."

The scrappy, hard-working guard has been instrumental in the Raptors' rise over the last three seasons. His shooting was off during the opening-round series against Indiana, but he made up for it with solid ball movement and defence. Lowry said the fact he's in a slump now, in the biggest stretch of his career, is what's most frustrating.

"It's crazy. It's mind-boggling to me. 'Dude how are you not making these shots?' For me, I go into the games like I'm about to go and we are going to win this game. Then I miss a shot and it's 'OK.' Then I miss another shot and that's when it's like 'Alright, I've got to try and do something different.'"

The Raptors had chances to win Game 1 despite Lowry's poor performance, but Toronto's two-time all-star said they can't win the series if he doesn't turn it around.

He'll get his next shot on Thursday, when the Raptors host the Heat in Game 2. The series then moves to Miami for Game 3 on Saturday and Game 4 on Monday. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Kyle Lowry sank just three of his 13 shots from the field in the Raptors' 102-96 overtime loss to the Heat on Tuesday night. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

> **"I got texts from my teammates and I've talked to them. They have my back. I just have to go out and play.**
> Kyle Lowry

NBA PLAYOFFS

Green driving Dubs' title run

Stephen Curry might be the face of the Warriors with the breathtaking long-range shots and ball-handling that makes Golden State so appealing to watch.

Draymond Green is the heart.

The loud, sometimes brash and amazingly versatile Green was the driving force behind the team's commitment to chase a record 73 wins in the regular season, the key to the team's dominant small-ball lineup and perhaps Golden State's most indispensable player.

A knee injury to Curry has done little to slow down the Warriors' run to a second straight title because fellow "Splash Brother" Klay Thompson has picked up the scoring load to help Golden State take a 2-0 series lead in the second round against Portland.

13.8

Golden State has outscored opponents by 13.8 points per 48 minutes with Green on the court and Curry off compared to 1.0 point per 48 minutes with Curry playing and Green resting.

Making up for what Green does on the court would be almost impossible. In the past four games, Green is averaging 18.3 points, 11 rebounds, eight assists and the Warriors have outscored the opponent by 109 points when he is on the court.

"Draymond is huge for us," centre Andrew Bogut said. "His playmaking ability, his defensive ability, he's probably the best all-around player in the league at this point." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Draymond Green GETTY IMAGES

MLB

Baseball's best Cubs sweep Pirates

The Chicago Cubs are threatening to run away with the NL Central.

Ben Zobrist hit a three-run home run, Anthony Rizzo also connected and Jon Lester worked out of a pair of jams to lead the Cubs over the second-place Pittsburgh Pirates 6-2 Wednesday for a three-game sweep.

With its seventh win in eight games, Chicago improved to a major league-best 20-6. The Cubs also won the seventh straight road game. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jon Lester GETTY IMAGES

IN BRIEF

Nats produce royal rout

Daniel Murphy finished a triple shy of the cycle, slumping slugger Bryce Harper also went deep and the Washington Nationals routed the floundering Kansas City Royals 13-2 on Wednesday.

Murphy and Clint Robinson drove in three runs apiece.

Stephen Strasburg improved to 5-0 allowing two runs on five hits and a walk while striking out seven in six tidy innings.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

Hartley miffed over claimed differences

Bob Hartley says he was surprised to hear that there were differences in philosophy within the Calgary Flames.

The NHL club fired Hartley as its head coach Tuesday after missing the playoffs for the third time in four years under his watch. Special teams and sub-par goaltending plagued Calgary for much of Hartley's final campaign, but he said he was proud of how young players like forwards Johnny Gaudreau, Sean Monahan and Sam Bennett had developed, as well as the continued emergence of defencemen Marc Giordano and T.J. Brodie.

"I just feel very sad that I didn't get the opportunity to keep working as a group, to keep working as an organization for better days," said Hartley. "There's no doubt in my mind this team is one or two years away from being an excellent hockey club and making a push real deep in the playoffs. THE CANADIAN PRESS

GIRO D'ITALIA

Hesjedal admits time is running low

Canadian cyclist Ryder Hesjedal has been planning for the Giro d'Italia since November, with a pre-race schedule that mirrors that of 2012 when he won the famed Grand Tour event.

He has endured cold weather and even snow in the buildup, but says he is physically ready for Friday's start of the 99th Giro in Apeldoorn, Netherlands. At 154 pounds, the lanky six-foot-two Hesjedal is a little over two pounds lighter than usual and looking forward to the grind that awaits him.

The Giro is understandably special to Hesjedal, the only Canadian to win one of cycling's three marquee Grand Tour events — the Tour de France and Vuelta a Espana are the other two.

This race could be even more significant. Hesjedal says in recent weeks he has been thinking long and hard about his post-Giro schedule — and his future. In the past he talked of doing the Tour de France and the Rio Olympics this summer. Now, the 35-year-old is not ready to commit until he reviews matters after the Giro.

Ryder Hesjedal HANDOUT

"If you really look at it, it could be my last Grand Tour," he said from Geneva.

He does plan to compete in several other events this year including the Quebec City-Montreal Grand Prix races, the Tour of Alberta and his hometown race, Ryder Hesjedal's Tour of Victoria.

At this stage of his career, Hesjedal is choosing his battlefields although he proved again last year that he can make waves on the bike.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Real Madrid's Gareth Bale nods the ball away from Manchester City's Gael Clichy on Wednesday at the Santiago Bernabeu.

FRANCISCO SECO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

All-Madrid final all set

PREMIER LEAGUE

Real to face local rivals after holding off Man City

SEMIFINAL Aggregate

1 — 0

Real Madrid ground out a convincing 1-0 victory over Manchester City on Wednesday to line up a Champions League final against city rival Atletico Madrid.

The second leg of the semifinal was decided by a superb shot by Gareth Bale from a tight angle that deflected off defender Fernando in the 20th minute and was marked down as an own goal. Madrid advanced with a 1-0 aggregate win after a scoreless first-leg draw in England last week.

Real Madrid will be trying to win its 11th Champions League title in the all-Spanish showdown in Milan on May 28, a rematch of the 2014 final — when it beat Atletico 4-1 after extra time.

"We will give everything in our souls in another final," Real Madrid defender Sergio Ramos said. "We managed to stay united and soak up the pressure to try and pull it off. We've eliminated a huge team in City. It has taken a lot to get to the final, but we deserve it."

Wednesday's win ended City's best ever participation in the Champions League, though it was outclassed on the night and never really looked like turning the game around. The wealthy English club hadn't made it past the round of 16 until this season.

Atletico eliminated five-time champion Bayern Munich in the other semifinal on Tuesday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

IN BRIEF

TV beckons for Wambach

Retired U.S. soccer star Abby Wambach is joining ESPN as an analyst and a contributor.

Wambach, the leading career scorer in international soccer, will cover the European Championships in France and the Rio Olympics in August.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Djokovic through in Spain

Top-ranked Novak Djokovic eased into the third round of the Madrid Open by beating Borna Coric 6-2, 6-4 Wednesday.

Djokovic, who had not played in Madrid since 2013, served four double faults but overpowered Coric with his return. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

RECIPE Lemon Thyme Chicken Burger

PHOTO: MAYA VISNYEI

Ceri Marsh & Laura Keogh
For Metro Canada

Lemon and thyme are such an appealing spring flavour combo that we come back to it over and over. It's an unexpected addition to a burger and don't skip the goat cheese which takes it over the top.

Ready in
Prep time: 10 minutes
Cook time: 10 minutes

Ingredients
- 1 lb ground chicken
- 2 Tbsp fresh thyme
- 1 Tbsp lemon zest
- 1 egg, whisked
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1/2 onion, finely minced
- 1/4 cup breadcrumbs
- 2 tsp dijon mustard
- salt and pepper
- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 4 wholewheat rolls
- toppings like lettuce, tomatoes, goat cheese

Directions

1. In a large bowl, mix together the meat, thyme, zest, juice, egg, breadcrumbs, onions mustard and salt and pepper. Using your hands, form the mixture into 4 x ¾ inch-thick patties.

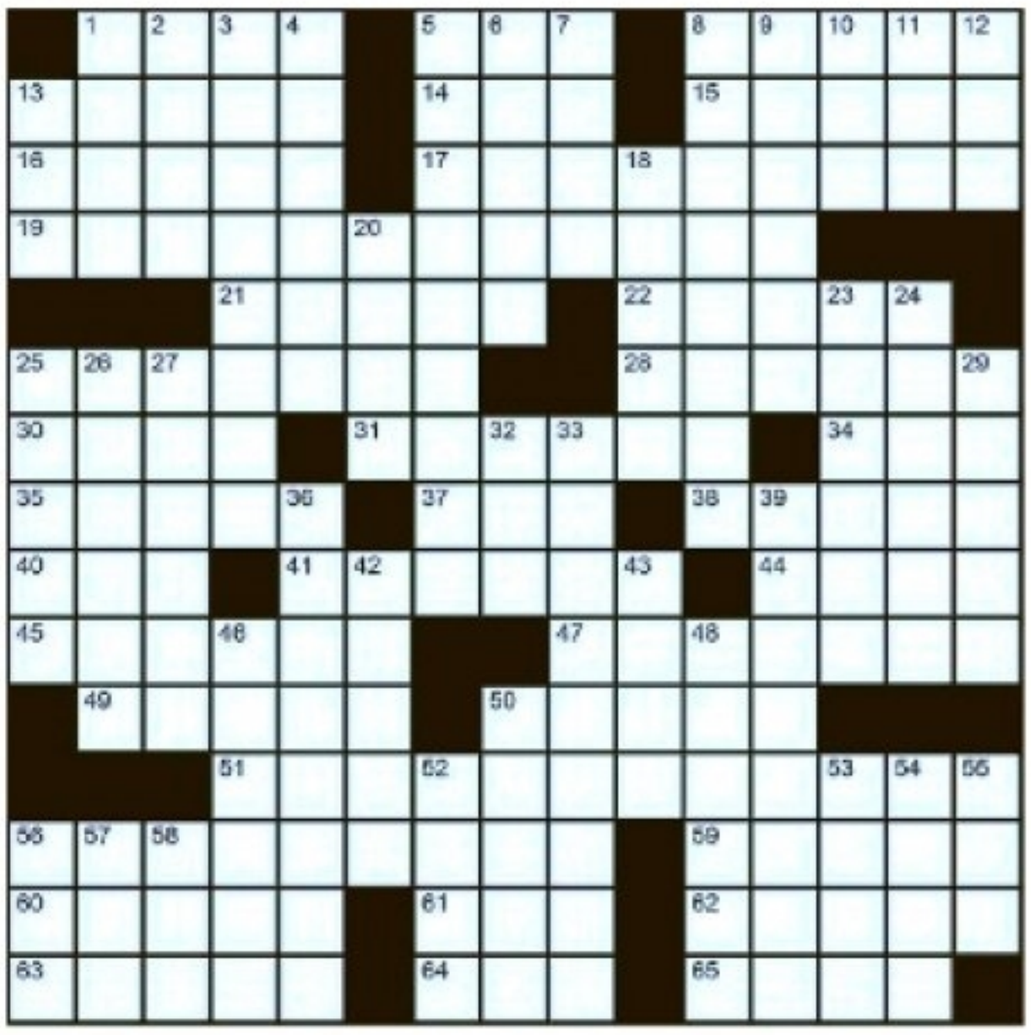
2. Heat up your pan or barbecue. Add a drop of vegetable oil to the pan if you're cooking them on the stove. Cook the patties over medium/high heat for about 5 minutes on each side. You want the internal temperature to be between 165 and 170.

3. Top your buns with whatever your family likes but we highly recommend goat cheese.

FOR MORE MEAL IDEAS, VISIT SWEETPOTATOCHRONICLES.COM

CROSSWORD Canada Across and Down

BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



ACROSS
1. Cutting comment
5. "Roxanne" (1987) star ...his initials-sharers
8. Relating to Atomic Number 76
13. Jazz/funk saxophonist Mr. Parker
14. Head-to-_
15. "Wheel of Fortune" letters turner
16. Drinking prop
17. Montreal borough
19. Hit movie of 1984 directed by Canadian director Ivan Reitman
21. Prison takeover, for example
22. Sun-dried brick
25. Newfoundland rum
28. Host/comedian Mr. O'Brien's
30. Murmurs
31. Fort _. _ (Northeastern BC city)
34. Dangerous fly, when doubled
35. Put down
37. "Wowy!"
38. Cyber correspondence
40. Broadcaster Mr. King, for short
41. Make a new home, as a bird
44. Gymnast Ms. Korbut
45. Very small antelope which makes a distinct sound when alarmed
47. Cone-shaped Medieval headdresses
49. "_ _ say more?"
50. Prefix to 'comedy' (Comedic drama)
51. Cheater's problem: 2 wds.
56. Oval track vehicle: 2 wds.
59. Sample that sample: 2 wds.
60. Jean _ (Quebec pharmacy chain)
61. _ de coeur (Heartfelt protest)
62. Some seals
63. Short acting performances
64. Suffix with 'Expert'
65. Peter Pan character

DOWN
1. Aptly-named hot springs town in England
2. Prefix to 'bat' (Circus performer)
3. Appraise anew
4. Tuxedo-wearer's accessory
5. 'Crossroads of Friendship' town in southern Saskatchewan
6. Computer's pointer/clicker
7. Cobblestone
8. Cooked too much
9. _ and Delilah
10. Alphabetic trio
11. Lodging for road trippers
12. Feline
13. Food additive, commonly
18. Stretch to grasp
20. Bird 'bills' in Boucherville
23. Celebrity chef Mario of ABC's "The Chew"
24. Navy rank
25. Steamily sting
26. Nirvana rocker Kurt
27. Mr. _ ("Fantasy Island" character)
29. Actress Ms. Ward's
32. Morning beverage, informally
33. 1984 Steve Perry song that goes "You should've been gone / Knowing how I made you feel.": 2 wds.
36. Southern hemisphere constellation
39. Personalized embroidery, as on a bathrobe
42. "Stand By Me" by Ben _. _
43. Ms. Hatcher
46. Joyce of "Three's Company"
48. Last regular play baseball innings
50. Department store chain
52. Nero's 701
53. Literature governess Jane
54. "Egad!"
55. Ands: French
56. Lettered colas
57. Hunky-dory
58. _ bono? = For whose benefit? ...in Latin

IT'S ALL IN THE STARS Your daily horoscope by Francis Drake

Aries March 21 - April 20
Business, commerce and all financial dealings are blessed today — no question. Do the deal. In addition, purchases of beautiful things for yourself and loved ones will please you. Ka-ching!

Taurus April 21 - May 21
You love beautiful things, good food and the outdoors, especially lovely gardens. Today is the perfect day to enjoy these things. It's also a lovely day for romance.

Gemini May 22 - June 21
Solitude in beautiful surroundings will delight you today. Pamper yourself in any way that you can.

Cancer June 22 - July 23
You will enjoy hanging out with creative, charming people today. You feel social and warmhearted toward others.

Leo July 24 - Aug. 23
You will make a great impression on bosses, parents, teachers and VIPs today. In fact, a flirtation or romance with your boss or someone in a position of authority might blossom.

Virgo Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Give yourself a chance to see beautiful places today. Travel for pleasure will be a treat, because you will truly appreciate the artistic creations of others.

Libra Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Because you can benefit from the wealth and resources of others today, this is a good time to ask for a loan or a mortgage. In all your dealings with others, people will be generous to you.

Scorpio Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
Relations with partners and close friends are warm and friendly today. This is a great day for a date or schmoozing with the general public.

Sagittarius Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Co-workers are supportive today. You might get a raise or praise! You will enjoy making your workplace more attractive in some way. (Let others help you if they offer.)

Capricorn Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Love at first sight is encouraged by the stars today. Whatever you do will be pleasant, fun-loving and enjoyable, because this is a lighthearted, pleasant day.

Aquarius Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
This is a good day to check out real estate deals or to buy something beautiful for your home. Invite the gang over for good food and drink, because today also favors family get-togethers.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You can make money with your words today, which is good news for writers, actors, teachers and people in sales.

CONCEPTIS SUDOKU by Dave Green

Every row, column and box contains 1-9

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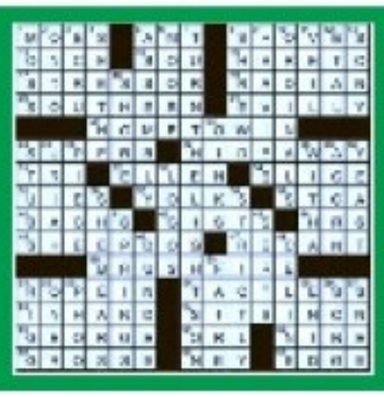
YESTERDAY'S ANSWERS

Your daily crossword and Sudoku answers from the play page.

for more fun and games go to metronews.ca/games



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3	7	6	9	5	1	4	2	8
8	4	1	2	6	7	3	5	9
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9	8	2	4	1	5	6	3	7
7	1	3	6	2	9	8	4	5

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